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May 2012
AED 15

Good Food

Mediterranean magic

MIDDLE EAST

- * Easy family **suppers**
- * Must-have **ingredients**
- * Gourmet **Italian**

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Restaurant reviews,
fab meal deals, new
openings and more!

DO TRY THIS AT HOME!

Jam and chutney recipes

WHAT'S ON YOUR PLATE?

*The low-down on
eating sustainably*

Green gourmet

Vegetarian delights

EVERYDAY SUPER SALADS



WEEKEND SWEET TREATS



WIN!
Weekend
break for
two

Espresso flavoured Seabass
with ratatouille, orange zest
and forest fruit sauce

CPI

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With a slice of lemon or on its own, naturally sparkling
Perrier refreshes under the most extreme circumstances.

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EDITOR'S NOTE



Fresh flavours

I still remember the first time I visited the Mediterranean – it was on a backpacking trip across Europe one summer years ago, and after a long, hot coach ride from Bordeaux to Nice, I caught my first glimpse of the glittering blue sea, playing hide and seek through the buildings. We

saw a lot more of that gorgeous blue over the next few days, but my most vivid memories of that holiday are of the crisp, vibrant flavours of all the beautiful food I worked my way through – the creamy deliciousness of escargot in France; the mouthwatering simplicity of a fresh salad with some olive oil drizzled over, in Italy; fragrant, herb-infused paella and tapas in Spain; oregano-sprinkled grilled summer vegetables in Greece... I could go on.

These are the flavours we are celebrating this month in our Mediterranean-themed issue. Inside, you will find all the inspiration you'll need to rustle up a light, healthy Med-flavoured feast at home, whether it's for a weekday supper (p34), or to impress friends at your next dinner party (p56). There's also an essential guide to the Mediterranean pantry ingredients no kitchen should do without (p14), a gourmet guide to Barcelona (p94), and a fun cook-off between three of the city's best Italian chefs – see what inventive recipes they came up with, on p60.

Plus, we take a look at how sustainable eating is gaining ground in the UAE (p44); share James Martin's easy, make-ahead weekend brunch menu (p68); and discover a contemporary take on Levantine cuisine from Dubai-based foodie, Dalia Dogmoch. This month, we also introduce a few new regulars – including restaurant reviews in *Tried & Tasted* (p101), and our *Meet the Blogger* page (p104), where we chat to the region's most interesting food bloggers.

I couldn't think of a more flavour-filled, jam-packed way to start this exciting culinary journey I'm about to embark on with you, our readers, with my first issue of *BBC Good Food ME*. I'd love to hear your thoughts, comments and feedback, so do drop me a line at feedback@bbcgoodfoodme.com.

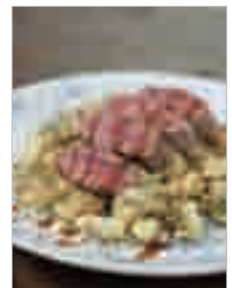
Happy cooking!

Sudeshna

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GoodFood
MIDDLE EAST

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Our recipe descriptions

- V** Suitable for vegetarians
- You can freeze it
- Not suitable for freezing
- P** Contains pork
- Contains alcohol
- Superhealthy** Low in saturated fat, 5g or less per portion; low in salt, 1.5g or less; and at least one of the following: provides one-third or more of your daily requirement of fibre, iron, calcium, folic acid and/or vitamin C or counts as one or two portions of your recommended 5-a-day fruit and vegetables.
- Low fat** 12g or less per portion.
- Good for you** Low in saturated fat, low in salt.
- Heart healthy** Low in saturated fat, with 5g or less, and low in salt, with 1.5g or less, and high in omega-3 fatty acids.

FYI!

Some recipes contain pork & alcohol. These are clearly marked and are for non-Muslims only. Look for this symbol:

- contains pork **P**
- contains alcohol

Win!

Fabulous prizes, from hotel stays to dinner vouchers, up for grabs.



WIN! LUNCH FOR TWO AT MINATO, RADISSON BLU HOTEL, DUBAI DEIRA CREEK

This Japanese restaurant features traditional décor including a teppanyaki table and sushi room. Offering a variety of authentic dishes, in a serene ambience, there's nowhere better for a taste of Japan.

WIN! THALI MEAL FOR TWO AT CHOR BAZAAR, IBN BATUTA GATE HOTEL

Feast on an authentic Indian thali that offers mouth watering dishes such as curries; prawn, chicken and lamb tandoori; vegetable dishes; and lentil mixes plus delicious desserts.



WIN! DINNER FOR TWO AT MEDZO, WAFI

Offering Italian cuisine in a beautiful setting, and friendly service, Medzo, is the perfect venue to enjoy an alfresco dinner. Treat yourself to delicious appetisers, mouth watering main courses, washed down with beverages, at this chic venue. (Check out our review on page 97 for more details).



WIN! DINNER FOR TWO AT MAZINA, THE ADDRESS DUBAI MARINA

Enjoy seasonal flavours with a special à la carte menu designed specifically for the month of May featuring delicacies like warm crab and botarga with potato-quail egg and smoked beetroot with asparagus.



WIN! A ONE-NIGHT STAY FOR TWO AT BEACH ROTANA, ABU DHABI

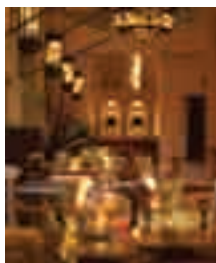
Conveniently located in the centre of the city with a direct entrance to the Abu Dhabi Mall, the hotel is the perfect destination to relax and unwind. The package includes a relaxing Rasul mud spa treatment, breakfast at Essence restaurant and dinner at Finz. All you need to do is answer a simple quiz question online to win this amazing prize!

WIN! A WEEKEND TREAT AT NINETEEN, THE ADDRESS MONTGOMERIE

Enjoy a unique Spanish themed dinner tucking into a delectable buffet of traditional favourites such as Paella and gazpacho, prepared to your liking. The prize is inclusive of soft drinks and select house beverages.

WIN! LUNCH FOR TWO AT RONDA LOCATELLI, ATLANTIS, THE PALM

Dine on Italian classics such as pizzas – made in a traditional wood-fired oven – antipasto, pasta and more, all made using fresh ingredients, in a charming rustic-chic setting.



WIN! DINNER FOR TWO AT EMIRATES PALACE, ABU DHABI

Mezalai, the first Emirati fine dining restaurant in the UAE, is offering two lucky winners a chance to feast on a range of authentic Emirati dishes that include meat, rice, lamb, mutton, and seafood, accompanied by popular local beverages such as cardamom, saffron and mint tea.

WIN! DINNER FOR TWO AT NA3NA3 TERRACE, THE ADDRESS DUBAI MALL

Indulge in a seafood extravaganza at Na3na3 with delicacies such as spicy gazpacho with chilled basil, shrimp skewers, grills from the live cooking stations, mussels, clams and ceviches, plus delicious soups to start.



To stand a chance to win these prizes, visit our competitions page on www.bbcgoodfoodme.com, or simply scan this QR code with your mobile to go directly to the website. Winning was never this easy!





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Foodie moments

What's hot and happening in the culinary world, here and around the globe.



Dining in the city

4 fab new restaurants to check out:

* Nestled in the Gate Village at DIFC, Roberto's (shown here) is the ultimate hotspot for an after work aperitif or an intimate dinner. Indulge in authentic and modern Italian cuisine such as slow braised Ossobuco and Mare Nero. Call 04-3469182.

* Tired of the same-old, same-old lunch options in the Dubai Media City area? Nando's has just opened its 10th outlet in the UAE – bring on the peri-peri heat! Call 04-3212000.

* We're very excited about the new Ruth's Chris Steakhouse and Lounge outpost opening its doors at The Address Dubai Marina. Gourmet steaks and classy cocktails - what's not to love? Call 04-4549538.

* Tuck into organic homemade Italian breads, pastas and pizzas at the newly opened Api CAE Gourmet in Abu Dhabi. With its central location at the Corniche, it's great for a quick lunch on the go as well as a relaxed evening meal. Call 02-6668909.

French flavours

Carrefour will be bringing a taste of France across all its stores in the U.A.E. from May 3-18 at its Bon Appétit promotion. Head down to one of the outlets hypermarkets, to sample a delicious assortment of cheese, sauces and more and avail special offers and deals on products.



SWEET AND STYLISH!

Want the latest IT bag? Candelite has launched an 'Arm Candy' collection of accessories made out of recycled candy wrappers of brands such as Hershey's, Twizzlers and Bubble-yum. Using a Mayan binding technique, artisans fold approximately 40,000 defective wrappers into little squares before piecing them together to create a one-of-a-kind handbag.

The Arm Candy range is available at all Candelite stores across the UAE. Prices start at Dhs30.

SMART FOOD SWAPS



550
calories

1 bag (100g) of salted potato crisps

Swap for:



118
calories

1 plain granola bar

40
calories

10 baby carrots

100
calories

1 celery stalk
with a teaspoon
of peanut butter



Coconut craze

As the weather heats up, make like the A-list this season and reach out for a carton of O.N.E coconut water to quench your thirst instead. Known for its health benefits and skin smoothening properties, this delicious drink contains five essential electrolytes and is free of corn syrup, artificial sweeteners, stimulants and colouring. Well, if it's good enough for Rihanna, Anne Hathaway and Madonna, it's good enough for us...

Available at all leading supermarkets across the U.A.E, Dhs. 10



Capital luxe

We've discovered the ideal place to unwind while soaking up the city views in Abu Dhabi. Vertical at Cristal Salam hotel is a swanky new rooftop lounge offering an exquisite range of wines and delicious tapas, accompanied by soulful tunes from the in-house DJ and saxophonist. Call 02-6597666.



Save the date!

Get set to gourmet from May 23-29, as the Jumeirah group of hotels hosts 'Restaurant Week' in UAE. An international concept popular in cities like New York and Hong Kong, the week-long event showcases some of the city's finest restaurants. 39 participating outlets – across different hotels, including Madinat Jumeirah, Emirates Towers, Jumeirah Zabeel Saray and Jumeirah at Etihad Towers, Abu Dhabi – will offer unique dining experiences at affordable prices.

Three course set menu meals cost from Dhs130, visit www.jumeirah.com for more.

Natural healing

In need of a health boost? Book yourself in for an Ayurvedic cleansing programme (Shodhana) at Dubai Herbal and Treatment Centre which promises to help increase vitality, energy levels and rid the body of illness with a 7-day diet plan and herbal medications. The programme, which also includes Ayurvedic massages, is available at a special price of Dh850 this month. Call 04-351200.



LOCAL TWIST

Ever wanted to taste camel meat? Here's a palate-friendly way to try it. Le Cafe at Emirates Palace Hotel Abu Dhabi has recently introduced a camel burger to its menu, which contains chopped camel meat flavoured with zaatar, harissa, mayonnaise, roccha, mint and chickpea fritters. Sounds interesting!



SO CHEESY!

Move over, buffalo mozzarella – Burrata is the latest cheese fad no gourmand can stop talking about! Made out of mozzarella and cream, this light, slightly sweetish cheese originates from Puglia in Italy, but is now trending in top Italian restaurants around the world. It is delicious in a fresh salad or served with crusty bread. Mmm!



Coffee with Fritz Storm

Coffee expert and champion barista, Fritz Storm, was in Abu Dhabi recently as a part of the Le Royal Meridien's LM 100 programme, which brings together a group of experts from various fields such as art, music and cuisine to help develop the guest experience for the hotels. We asked him for his tips on brewing the perfect cup of coffee:

1. Make sure to never use hard water, the quality of water is vital, especially for espresso.
2. Use freshly ground coffee and serve in a warm cup. Drink a cup of coffee immediately after brewing, for the best taste.
3. Invest in a good espresso machine and grinder, if you are a coffee lover. Always buy a grinder designed specifically for the purpose of grinding espresso.

Off the shelf

Gorgeous gourmet buys, kitchen gear, foodie accessories and more.



Got the mid-day munchies? The Good Stuff range of snacks are scrumptious and healthy too, being completely vegetarian, gluten-free, nut-free and dairy free. From Dhs10, at **CANDELITE**.



Brighten up a coffee table with this colourful Ashi plexi hand tray, Dhs431, from **AURA-B.COM**.



If you're looking for creative gift ideas for a mum-to-be, look no further than **SPRÜNGLI'S** special baby shower collection of chocolates. Personalisation options also offered, from Dhs120.



Planning a party? Send out your invites in style with these chic notelets (pack of 12 cards and envelopes). Dhs85 at **HARVEST HOME**.

This bright and chic Bouton D'Or set will add instant glamour to any dinner party, Dhs825 at **LUMINARC**.



Peel, core and slice apples in seconds with the snazzy Apple master, Dhs99 at **LAKELAND**.



Get your daily dose of caffeine from the stylish Severin S2 One Touch machine that is designed to operate automatically at the touch of a button. Dhs3,450 at select **JACKY'S** and **PLUG-INS** outlets.

This stylish Acacia salad bowl with servers costs Dhs299, at **CRATE & BARREL**. Serving up a fresh salad never looked this good!



Give your dining table a Middle Eastern makeover with these Arabic inspired crockery sets. Dhs225 at **LIFESTYLE**.





nineteen

SUNSET FRIDAY AT NINETEEN

The Address MONTGOMERIE DUBAI

Add special flair to your Friday with a unique Spanish-themed evening at our signature restaurant, Nineteen. Enjoy a delectable buffet featuring traditional Paella, individually prepared to your liking.

AED 295 per person (including soft drinks)
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THE ADDRESS
MONTGOMERIE DUBAI

WHERE *life* HAPPENS

UPFRONT EATING OUT

Flavours of the month

Our pick of the best restaurant offers, promotions and deals this May.



Asado, Palace, the Old Town



iZ, Grand Hyatt Dubai

Argentinean flair

Asado at The Palace, The Old Town, is serving an innovative Argentinean menu. Think venison loin with black quinoa salad (inspired by various musical tangos).

Available every Sunday from Dhs. 299 per head. Call 04-4287888.

A fashionable high tea

Food meets fashion at the stylish afternoon tea at **Raffles Dubai**. You can tuck into white chocolate stilettos with strawberry chips in shades of green, sandwiches, polka dotted dresses made from cheese and more. The menu changes every season and this month has been inspired by spring/summer runway trends.

Available from Sunday to Tuesday, from Dh175 per head (including house beverages).

Call 04-4052703.



Mediterranean feast

Tuck into delicious Spanish, Italian and French cuisine at Dunes Cafe, Shangri-La Hotel Dubai, feasting on traditional tapas and paella on Sundays, French cuisine on Mondays and Italian dishes such as risotto, pastas and pizza on Tuesdays.

From Dhs. 175 per person. Call 04-3438888.

Asparagus season

Enjoy a seasonal white and green asparagus menu at **Traiteur, Park Hyatt Dubai**, which includes delicacies like pan-fried sea bass garnished with white asparagus, while enjoying a glass of Sauvignon Blanc to enhance the aromas of every dish.

Call 04-3172222.

Dine on a special à la carte menu created to celebrate the seasonal vegetable at **Mazina, The Address Dubai Marina**, where you can enjoy a selection of asparagus starters and entrées, while taking in the views of the beautiful marina. Available daily this month. Call 04-4367777.

Game night

Catch the cricket fever as it comes alive at **iZ, Grand Hyatt Dubai**, while tucking into authentic Indian tandoori cuisine, finger foods and standard beverages.

Available every Saturday for lunch and dinner. Call 0800- IC-DINE (0800- 423463).

Modern Indian

Chef Satish from Angar, Yas Viceroy Abu Dhabi offers a contemporary take on Indian this month, with a tasting menu featuring dishes such as crab chaat, grilled salmon with raita and saffron tiramisu.

From Dhs160 per head. Call 02-6560600.

A bullet and a bite

Tempt your taste buds with delicious grilled steaks and fajitas, washed down with refreshing cocktails, while enjoying a round of clay pigeon and pistol shooting at the newly relaunched **Shooters Bar & Restaurant at Jebel Ali International Shooting Club**.

Available from Dhs. 250 per head (including a round of shooting and one main course). Call 04-8836555.

European fiesta

Tuck into the exciting new Mediterranean and Provincial menu created by chef Maxine at **Embassy's Kitchen 45 restaurant in Grosvenor House Dubai**. Expect delicacies like steamed oysters, and pear and chestnut tarte. *Open Monday-Friday, call 04-3176000.*



Berrylicious

Savour decadent berry desserts such as meringue and gâteaux aux fruits rouges at the authentic French, **PAUL café**. For those who prefer a less calorific treat, you can treat yourself to a fresh berry salad that is healthy and bursting with goodness. *Berry desserts available this month and next at all PAUL cafes.*

Beach brunch

Tired of brunches in the city? Plan a weekend getaway to **Al Hamra Fort and Beach Resort, Ras al Khaimah** and enjoy the lively Beach BBQ brunch which includes an extensive international buffet, a boat bar serving drinks, live entertainment and kids' play areas, plus beach access. Less than an hour from Dubai, it makes for the perfect Friday family outing. *Fridays from 11am to 4pm. From Dh135 per head. Call 07-2446666.*



Get crabby

Head down to **Fishmarket, Intercontinental Abu Dhabi** for their latest crab promotion and choose from a sumptuous selection of live Ruby Crab, South Devon Crab and king crab legs, cooked to your liking, and paired with a sauce of your choice. Dig in! *Available every Saturday for lunch and dinner. Call 0800-ICDINE (0800-423463).*

Germany on a plate

Celebrate Maifest, the German heritage festival, at **Hofbräuhaus, JW Marriott Hotel Dubai**, by feasting on a traditional Bavarian buffet, accompanied by a traditional two-piece band from Germany, this month. *Available from Sunday to Tuesday, from Dh175 per head (including house beverages). Call 04-4052703.*

A fine pairing

Head to **Ember**, the trendy restaurant and lounge at **The Address Dubai Mall**, next Tuesday for their new Vintage Nights. A sophisticated five course menu – think tuna carpaccio with shaved foie gras terrine, wild mushroom pasta, grilled salmon with jumbo prawns and apple crumble with vanilla soup and rhubarb sorbet – paired with premium vintages, with live entertainment to match. Delish! *From Dh295 per head, .call 04-8883444.*

Brunch with a view

This one of a kind brunch at **BICE Mare**, Souk al Bahar, offers a range of martinis to complement dishes such as mixed seafood platters, homemade ravioli and dessert. It's the perfect way to indulge your taste-buds while taking in the views of the dancing Dubai fountains. *Every Friday for lunch, from Dh250 per head. Call 04-4239082.*



Got 45 to spare?

Treat yourself to a wallet-friendly 45-minute business lunch (bill included within the minutes) at **Pompeii**, located in Jumeirah Lake Towers, choosing two classic Italian dishes from a range of salads, pastas, lasagnas and dessert. *Available daily, Dh45 per head. Call 04-4539390.*

Silk, spice and everything nice!

The recently opened restaurant at **Sofitel Abu Dhabi Corniche, Silk & Spice**, offers a taste of Bangkok with dishes such as deep fried prawn spring roll and spicy Thai beef salad. Dine in a traditional setting with views of the stunning Corniche in the backdrop. *Available daily for dinner. Call 02-8137777.*

BBQ by the beach

The stylish steakhouse at **Oceana Beach Club, West 14th**, is entering new territory with its Arabic grill menu. Enjoy succulent kebabs, seafood and vegetables, while enjoying the views of the beach. *Available on Wednesdays for dinner from Dh95. Call 04-4477601.*



Gourmet on the golf course

Indulge in a wide array of the popular delicacies at the award-winning **Le Classique, Emirates Golf Club**, choosing from buffet starters and desserts, fresh food from live cooking stations and mains from an à la carte menu. Gorgeous views of the greens come free! *Available on Tuesday and Saturdays from Dh195. Call 04-4417999.*



RASPBERRY SORBET

*Real fruit sorbet with luscious raspberries
and a tangy twist of lemon and lime juice.*



Berry fantasy

This chocolate and cream concoction perfectly complements the tangy kick of a raspberry sorbet. Chef Issa Salman from Kempinski Hotel Ishtar, Dead Sea, Jordan shows us how to create the ultimate dessert.



Chef Issa Salman



"Chocolate and berries are a classic combination."

Raspberry sorbet with cream cheese and chocolate mud cake

INGREDIENTS:

For chocolate mud cake:

125g sugar
125ml water
125g chocolate
150g butter
150g eggs
50g sugar
2g vanilla
5g baking soda
150g flour

For cream cheese mousse:

150g cream cheese
50g egg yolk
25g sugar
1 gelatine sheets
125g whipped cream

METHOD:

1 In a saucepan, heat the water, sugar, butter and chocolate. Mix well and set aside.

2 Using a mixer, combine the egg and sugar for 10 minutes. Gently, add the first mixture and mix on low speed for 2 minutes. Add the flour, crushed hazelnut and baking soda and mix together for 1 minute.

3 Pour the mix into the mould and bake for 15 minutes at 180 degree C. Set aside to cool.

4 To make the cream cheese mousse, mix the cream cheese and icing sugar with a mixer for 5 minutes.

5 Steam the egg yolk for 5 minutes, to create a sabayon. Meanwhile, heat the gelatine and mix thoroughly with the egg yolk. Gently, add the whipped cream and cream cheese mixture and combine all ingredients thoroughly.

6 Pour the mix in a flat pan and freeze for 3 hours before serving.

Serve with style:



1 To plate, place the chocolate cake, and the mousse over it with a chocolate garnish square in between. Top with a brandy snap tuille to decorate.



2 Gently place a scoop of the raspberry sorbet.



3 Top up with spun sugar to decorate.



RASPBERRY SORBET

A refreshing real fruit sorbet made with luscious raspberries and tangy twist of lemon and lime juice.



A Mediterranean pantry

Ingredients typically used in Mediterranean cuisine not only add a fresh, unique flavour to any dish, but also offer health benefits. Make sure these staples are always stocked in your kitchen, says Nicola Monteath.



probably what makes the Mediterranean diet one of the healthiest. Commonly used ingredients in Mediterranean cuisine are packed with nutrition, with wide-ranging health benefits, from helping to improve cardiac health, battle cancer, and even aid weight-loss.

"The high amounts of vegetables, fruits, legumes and grains, use of white meat and fish, and unsaturated fats from sources like olive oil and nuts makes this one of the healthiest eating styles. Salt is not used in excess, with fresh herbs and garlic adding flavour to the dishes," explains nutritionist Lily Mueller from Dubai Herbal & Treatment Centre.

The flavours of the ingredients in Mediterranean food are

simple and clear, with the ingredients being the heroes of a dish. Onions, garlic and tomatoes are combined with olive oil as a base for many dishes. "Each ingredient can be tasted, and they are not masked by cream and butter, lots of spices, or heavy dressings," says Farah Sawaf, author of the food website, *Cooking with a Manicure*.

Aside from the fresh fruit and veg, there are certain herbs and condiments that typify Mediterranean flavours, many of which have made their way into modern kitchens. Here is our list of the Med ingredients that you should always stay stocked up with:



Olive oil

It is hard to find a kitchen these days that doesn't have a bottle of olive oil. The staple that originated in the Mediterranean region is used in a variety of cooking methods, and makes for a healthier substitute for butter.

Nutritional benefits

A great source of Vitamin E, the oil consists of antioxidants and healthy monosaturated fats that have been proven to steady blood sugar and pressure levels as well as reduce the risk of cardiovascular attacks.

Serving ideas

- *Use to sauté vegetable and meats, as an alternative to butter or sunflower oil.
- *Use as a salad dressing, on its own, or combine with garlic, lemon juice and a few drops of balsamic vinegar.

Top tip: When selecting olive oil, look for bottles with a dark tint as it protects the oil from oxidation caused by direct exposure to light. Make sure the bottle is stored in a cool area in your kitchen.

The Mediterranean region – defined as such as the countries not only enjoying a coastline bordering the beautiful blue sea, but also a shared culture, culinary and otherwise, thanks to its common colonised history – stretches all the way from Morocco and Syria to southern European countries like France, Greece and Italy.

The mild climate and clear, dry soil makes for an abundance of fruit and vegetables, which are predominant in the diet of the region, complemented by the bounty of the ocean. This combination is



Thyme

The aromatic herb, available in fresh and dried varieties, is perfect

for garnishing or used as the last step in a recipe, as it tends to lose its delicate flavour if heated for a long period of time. Thyme pairs well with goose, duck, tomato sauces and isn't overpowering in a dish. Note that one fresh sprig of thyme equals to the flavouring power of one half teaspoon of dried thyme.

Nutritional benefits

Packed with minerals, calcium, iron, and essential vitamins such as A, K, E and C, the herb boosts immunity and aids new cell growth. It is known for its medicinal qualities, which includes relief for coughs, bronchitis and colds (while combating parasites such as tapeworms and hookworms).

Serving ideas

- *Season soups, stews and stocks
- *Sprinkle half a tsp over omelettes and pastas
- *Infused in a marinade for roasts, chicken, lamb chops and steaks

Top tip: Strip the leaves from its stem before cooking, as the stems can be woody at times.

Chickpeas

Known globally for its usage in the Arabic cuisine staple, hommous, this versatile legume also known as garbanzo beans is frequently used in Mediterranean food, especially in salads and pastas.



Nutritional benefits

Chickpeas are an excellent source of Vitamin E and A, calcium, magnesium and phosphorus which is essential for bone development.

Serving ideas

- *Roasted with olive oil and a sprinkle of paprika
- *Boiled with a sprinkle of salt and pepper
- *Boil chickpeas beforehand to add to pasta with charred peppers and cherry tomatoes

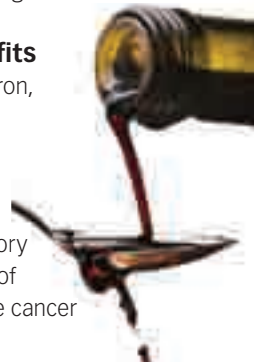
Top tip: To avoid drying out chickpeas and gain the canned type of tenderness, soak chickpeas in unsalted water overnight, rinse again, and boil before utilising in a dish.

Balsamic Vinegar

A condiment that originally hails from Italy, balsamic is created from a reduction of the juice harvested from fresh white grapes. Its flavour intensifies over time, like wine – aged balsamic tastes better – and is a great addition to salads.

Nutritional benefits

Rich in minerals and iron, balsamic vinegar is low in saturated fats and sodium which is great for the heart, digestive and circulatory system and contains of polyphenols that have cancer fighting properties.



Serving ideas

- *Serve on the side, with olive oil and bread
- *As an ingredient in salad dressing, mixed with olive oil, or drizzled over a salad
- *As a marinade ingredient for meats

Top tip: Do not use aluminium pots when using balsamic vinegar; make sure the pans and bowls are non-reactive.

Oregano

This popular herb is available in dried and fresh varieties and it has an aromatic, slightly bitter taste. It is great combined with roasted or sautéed vegetables, meat and seafood.



Nutritional benefits

High in fibre, oregano has anti-bacterial properties and is loaded with vitamins and minerals. It also contains large amounts of iron, Vitamin C, A, K and essential Omega 3 fatty acids.

Serving ideas

- *As garnish on a pizza
- *Infused to create an aromatic olive oil
- *Sprinkled over roast vegetables

Top tip: Fresh oregano should be wrapped in slightly damp paper towels and can be frozen in airtight containers to keep from going off.



Basil

A fragrant and delicious herb, basil is the main ingredient in pesto (mixture of basil, pine nuts and parmesan cheese), and is usually added towards the end of

a cooked dish as garnish. Basil has many uses (and variants, with Thai food also using a different kind of basil) whether it's tossed with pasta, garnished over a salad or added to a marinade.

Nutritional benefits

Basil contains flavanoids which are known to aid the protection of cells within our bodies. Basil is a great source of Vitamin A, C, potassium and iron which improves blood flow and promotes cardiovascular health.

Serving ideas

- *Chopped and sprinkled on a pasta dish
- *As a garnish for a simple caprese salad (tomato and buffalo mozzarella cheese)

Top tip: When choosing fresh basil, look for fresh green leaves with no dark spots or signs of decay.



HERE ARE SOME TYPICALLY MEDITERRANEAN VEGETABLES YOU COULD USE WITH THESE PANTRY INGREDIENTS:

Artichokes

These can be steamed, braised or baked and is generally known for its meaty centre known as the heart. Not only is it low-calorie, it also has high potassium levels, which helps promote kidney health.



Eggplant

With its rich, intense colour and smooth texture, the versatile vegetable has a creamy and smoky texture that is a great addition to salads and casseroles. High in Vitamins B, C and K, eggplants are known

to improve skin tone and aid weight loss. Eat them stuffed, mashed to create a dip or roasted to puree and create babaganoush.

Zucchini (Courgettes)

Containing only 17 calories per 100g and with zero saturated fats, zucchini is excellent for heart health. They can be roasted alongside bell peppers (another quintessentially Mediterranean veg), eaten raw in a salad, or even shredded to add to breads and muffins.





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Everyday recipes

Healthy, delicious mid-week meals

Smoked trout with
warm potatoes.
recipe, p24



18 Light salads with global flavours



30 Simple weeknight suppers



34 Mediterranean made easy



EVERYDAY

Sensational salads

Add the wow factor to a fresh salad with these inventive, flavour-packed recipes.
Recipes JENNIFER JOYCE Photographs PETER CASSIDY



Vietnamese
prawn & noodle
salad with
crispy shallots

Food styling JENNIFER JOYCE | Styling LISA HARRISON

Vietnamese prawn & noodle salad with crispy shallots

SERVES 4 ● PREP 15 mins ●

COOK 10 mins **Easy** 

Superhealthy Counts as 1 of 5-a-day **Low fat**

Making the fried shallots is optional, but well worth it – they're incredibly delicious.

200g thin rice noodles

200g large cooked, peeled prawns

1 small red onion, halved and sliced

1 small red chilli, sliced

1 small cucumber, shaved into ribbons (use a peeler)

1 large handful each coriander and mint

2 tbsp roasted peanuts, roughly chopped

FOR THE DRESSING

juice 3 limes

1 tbsp soft brown sugar

2 tsp fish sauce

1 garlic clove, crushed

FOR THE CRISPY SHALLOTS

5 shallots, thinly sliced

vegetable oil, for frying

flour, for dusting


1 To make the dressing, mix the lime juice, sugar, fish sauce and garlic and set aside. In a large mixing bowl, pour boiling water over the noodles. Leave them for 2 mins or until they are just cooked, then rinse under cold water. Drain well, shaking the sieve numerous times to get out the excess water, then place back in the bowl. Add prawns, onion, chilli, cucumber and herbs. Pour the dressing over, mix, then sprinkle with the shallots and peanuts.

2 To make the crispy shallots, heat 5cm of oil until hot in a wok. You will know the oil is hot enough when one piece of shallot sizzles as soon as it's dropped in. Toss the shallot slices with flour, shake off excess and fry in the oil until golden. They fry quickly, about 1 min. Drain on kitchen paper, sprinkle with salt and set aside.

PER SERVING 331 kcs, protein 18g, carbs 53g, fat 7g, sat fat 1g, fibre 2g, sugar 7g, salt 1.41g

Fruity couscous & spiced quail

SERVES 2 ● PREP 15 mins ●

COOK 10 mins **Easy** 

If it's just the two of you, spatchcock quail is a real treat and a tasty change from chicken.

150ml fresh orange juice

5 dried apricots, roughly chopped

100g couscous

1 small red onion, thinly sliced into rings

2 tbsp red wine vinegar

1 large handful each flat-leaf parsley and mint, chopped, plus a few extra mint leaves to serve

30g pine nuts, toasted

2 quails (spatchcocked)

2 tbsp olive oil

1 tsp ground cinnamon

1 tbsp honey

1 In a small saucepan, heat the orange juice and apricots until it boils. Remove from heat and take out 2 tbsp of juice for the dressing. Pour couscous into a bowl and pour the juice and apricot mix over, cover and let sit for 5 mins. In a bowl, mix the sliced onions in 1 tbsp of the vinegar and set aside. Fluff up the couscous with a fork until the lumps are broken up. Add the herbs and pine nuts.

2 Heat a barbecue or grill until very hot. Rub the quail with some oil. Season well, sprinkle over the cinnamon and drizzle with a little of the honey. Barbecue or grill the quail for 3-4 mins each side until crisp at the edges. Mix remaining olive oil with reserved orange juice, vinegar and honey. Season and mix well. Drain onions and toss into couscous. Serve the quail on the couscous with dressing poured over, scattered with mint leaves.

PER SERVING 635 kcs, protein 30g, carbs 51g, fat 36g, sat fat 6g, fibre 3g, sugar 24g, salt 0.21g

Garden supper for two that can be cooked on the barbecue





Quick to make
and smart enough
to serve to friends

Mediterranean fig & mozzarella salad

SERVES 4 as a main or 6 as a starter
PREP 15 mins • COOK 5 mins

Easy **V** **+** Counts as 1 of 5-a-day

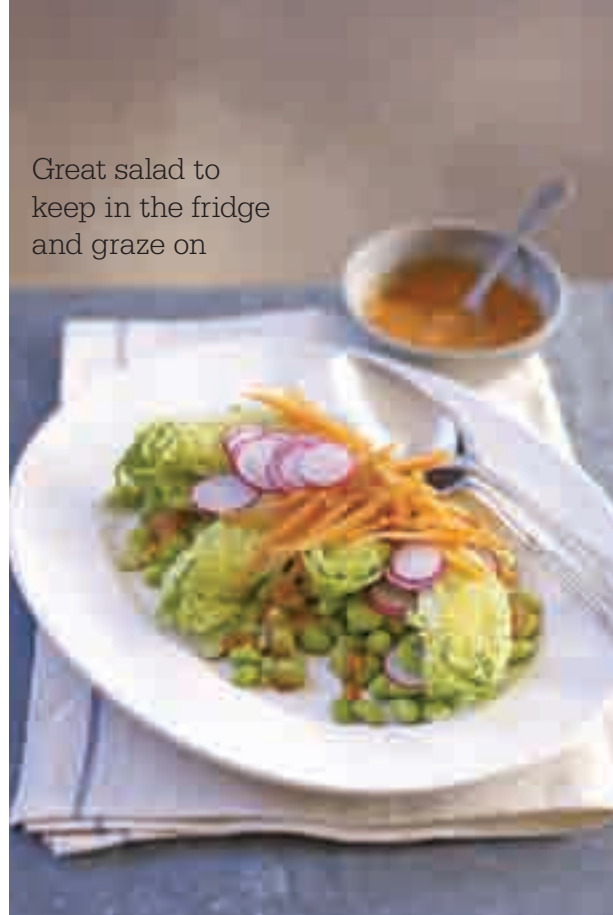
If you want to make this more substantial, you could serve some prosciutto or Serrano ham with it.

200g fine green beans, trimmed
6 small figs, quartered
1 shallot, thinly sliced
1 x 125g ball mozzarella, drained and ripped into chunks
50g hazelnuts, toasted and chopped
small handful basil leaves, torn
3 tbsp balsamic vinegar
1 tbsp fig jam or relish
3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil

1 In a large saucepan of salted water, blanch the beans for 2-3 mins. Drain, rinse in cold water, then drain on kitchen paper. Arrange on a platter. Top with the figs, shallots, mozzarella, hazelnuts and basil.

2 In a small bowl or jam jar with fitted lid, add the vinegar, fig jam, olive oil and some seasoning. Shake well and pour over salad just before serving.

PER SERVING 286 kcals, protein 10g, carbs 11g, fat 23g, sat fat 6g, fibre 3g, sugar 9g, salt 0.30g



Great salad to
keep in the fridge
and graze on

Japanese salad with ginger soy dressing

SERVES 4 • PREP 30 mins • NO COOK

Easy **V** **+** **Superhealthy**

Counts as 2 of 5-a-day

Serve this alongside grilled tuna or steak.

4 Baby Gem lettuces, halved lengthways

200g frozen shelled edamame (soy) beans, defrosted

4 carrots, cut into long matchsticks

140g radishes, thinly sliced

FOR THE DRESSING

2 tbsp rice wine vinegar

2 tbsp reduced-salt soy sauce

2 tbsp caster sugar

½ small onion, chopped

2 tsp chopped ginger

1 tbsp tomato purée

2 tbsp vegetable oil

Place all the dressing ingredients in a blender or food processor and add 1 tbsp water. Blend until smooth. Arrange the halved lettuce, edamame, carrots and radishes on 4 plates or 1 big platter. When ready to serve, drizzle the dressing over.

PER SERVING 195 kcals, protein 8g, carbs 25g, fat 8g, sat fat 1g, fibre 5g, sugar 19g, salt 1.07g

A stunning
centrepiece –
and so easy, too

Red rice & chicken salad with pomegranate & feta

SERVES 4 • PREP 15 mins •

COOK 30 mins **Easy**

Shop-bought roast chickens are perfect for shredding into salads. This makes enough for a big bowl and keeps for two to three days in the fridge, so pack up any leftovers for your lunchbox.

250g red Camargue rice
zest and juice 2 lemons
4 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
pinch of caster sugar
1 small ready-roasted chicken,
skin discarded and meat
shredded
50g almonds, toasted and
chopped
1 medium cucumber, deseeded,
cut into diagonal chunky pieces
1 bunch spring onions, chopped
100g feta, crumbled
1 pomegranate, seeds removed
small handful dill, finely chopped

1 Boil the rice in plenty of salted water until just cooked, about 30 mins.
2 Meanwhile, make the dressing and prepare the other ingredients. Place the lemon zest and juice, and olive oil in a jam jar with a fitted lid. Add seasoning and the sugar and shake well. Drain cooled rice and tip into a large bowl. Pour the dressing over the warm rice and mix well. Let it soak in a little, then toss through the rest of the ingredients.

PER SERVING 922 kcals, protein 69g, carbs 56g, fat 48g, sat fat 13g, fibre 3g, sugar 8g, salt 4.07g

TIP Red Camargue rice has a nutty flavour and chewy texture. It gets its colour from the outer bran layers of the husk, which are left intact, rather than being polished like white rice. It is available specialist food shops and select supermarkets.



5 toast toppers

Try these delicious new ways to turn a slice of bread into a light meal or snack.

Herby mushrooms on toast

SERVES 2 ● PREP 5 mins ● COOK 10 mins **Easy** **V** **P** **Superhealthy** Counts as 1 of 5 a-day

Roughly chop a **250g pack mushrooms**, then fry with a **knob of butter** for 5-6 mins, until soft and light golden. Add **1 crushed garlic clove**, and cook for 1 min more. Remove from the heat, then stir through **another knob of butter** and **1 tbsp chopped parsley**. Toast **2 slices of bread** and top with the mushrooms.

Recommended bread:

Crusty wholemeal.

PER SERVING 153 kcals, protein 6g, carbs 16g, fat 8g, sat fat 4g, fibre 3g, sugar 1g, salt 0.32g

Bacon & eggs

SERVES 3 ● PREP 5 mins ● COOK 10 mins **Easy** **V** **P** **Good for you, Low fat**

Dry-fry **4 rashers diced streaky bacon** until crisp. Beat together **6 eggs** with seasoning and **2 tbsp milk**. Tip into the pan with the bacon and gently stir until scrambled and fluffy.

Toast **4 slices of bread** and divide between 4 plates. Top with the bacon and the eggs and add **a few snipped chives**, if you like.

Recommended bread: Sliced white.

PER SERVING 372 kcals, protein 24g, carbs 24g, fat 21g, sat fat 6g, fibre 1g, sugar 2g, salt 1.75g

Peanut butter, banana & honey

SERVES 2 ● PREP 5 mins ● COOK 5 mins **Easy** **V** **P** **Good for you, Low fat**

Lightly toast **4 small slices bread**. Spread each slice with **1 tbsp chunky peanut butter**, then top with **½ sliced banana each**. Finish with **a drizzle of clear honey**.

Recommended bread: Brioche.

PER SERVING 308 kcals, protein 7g, carbs 52g, fat 10g, sat fat 3g, fibre 3g, sugar 24g, salt 0.65g

Roasted tomato, mozzarella & rocket

SERVES 2 ● PREP 5 mins ● COOK 30 mins

Easy **V** **P**

Heat oven to 200C/180C fan. Lay **350g halved baby plum tomatoes**, cut side up, in a roasting tray and drizzle with **1 tbsp olive oil**, **1 tbsp balsamic vinegar** and **a few thyme sprigs**, chopped.

Season and cook for 30 mins.

Meanwhile, toast **4 thick slices of bread** until golden. Divide between 2 plates and top with the tomatoes. Scatter on **125g ball torn mozzarella**, a **few basil leaves** and **a small handful rocket**. Serve with **a drizzle olive oil**.

Recommended bread: Sourdough.

PER SERVING 543 kcals, protein 13g, carbs 57g, fat 31g, sat fat 7g, fibre 6g, sugar 8g, salt 1.39g

Cheese & onion rarebit

SERVES 4 ● PREP 5 mins ● COOK 20 mins

Easy **P**

Heat **1 tbsp olive oil** in a small saucepan and gently cook **1 finely chopped onion** until soft, about 5 mins. Tip out the pan and add **25g butter**. When foaming add **25g plain flour**, cook stirring constantly for 1 min, then pour in **150ml milk**.

Simmer, stirring often to remove any lumps, for 2 mins, then remove from the heat and add **1 tsp mustard**, a **dash Worcestershire sauce**, the onions and **75g cheddar**.

Heat grill to High and toast **8 small slices of bread**. When lightly golden, top with a thick layer of the sauce and grill until golden and bubbling. Serve with **watercress**, if you like.

Recommended bread: Baguette.

PER SERVING 284 kcals, protein 10g, carbs 27g, fat 16g, sat fat 8g, fibre 1g, sugar 5g, salt 1.08g





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With temperatures rising, it's the perfect time to chill with a refreshing exotic drink. This May, join us at Mazina's Generation Creation Saturday brunch and work with your family to create some innovative and colourful mocktails. While you compete in this challenge to create the finest liquid concoction, we provide a mouthwatering menu of international favorites on the buffet. Entertainment for kids of all ages includes a bouncy castle, Wii games, face painting and special play area, it's guaranteed fun for everyone. Sign up for your Generation Creation station today and win exciting prizes.

Date: 19th May 2012

Time: 12:30pm to 3:30pm

Special price: AED 195 including soft beverages

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WHERE *life* HAPPENS

Ready in 30

These smart salads – all under 500 calories – make perfect, healthy weeknight suppers
 Recipes JENNIFER JOYCE Photographs GARETH MORGANS



Watercress, mango and duck salad

SERVES 2 • 20 minutes • **Easy**



1 duck breast, about 200g
50g watercress
mango 1 small, cut into matchsticks
2 tsp sesame seeds, toasted
FOR SOY DRESSING
2 tbsp soy sauce
1 tbsp sesame oil
lime 1, juiced
1 tbsp golden caster sugar

1 Heat a non-stick pan. Score a criss-cross pattern into the skin of the duck. Pan-fry skin-side down for 8 minutes on medium heat. Let the fat melt slowly without burning the skin. Turn over and cook for another 4 minutes on the other side. Lift out of the pan, sit on kitchen paper for 5 minutes to drain off any fat and then thinly slice.

2 To make the dressing, whisk the soy sauce, sesame oil, lime juice and sugar together.

3 Put the watercress and mango on plates, add the sliced duck, drizzle with the dressing and sprinkle over the sesame seeds.

PER SERVING 385 kcs, protein 16.8g, carbs 25.4g, fat 24.7g, sat fat 5.6g, fibre 3.7g, salt 2.91g

Smoked trout with warm potatoes

SERVES 2 • 20 minutes • **Easy**



500g new potatoes
tarragon a small bunch, stems removed and leaves chopped
shallot 1, finely chopped
1 tbsp red wine vinegar
2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
spring onions 6, finely chopped
pea shoots 50g (or use 50g rocket)
125g hot smoked trout

1 Boil the potatoes in salted water for 10-15 minutes until easily pierced with a knife. Drain and when cool enough to handle, cut into thick slices.

2 Mix together the tarragon, shallot, red wine vinegar, oil and seasoning. Pour 3/4 of it over the warm potatoes and mix. Add the spring onions and pea shoots and mix again.

3 Divide between 2 plates and top with the hot trout. Pour the remaining dressing over and serve.

PER SERVING 392 kcs, protein 20.2g, carbs 41.7g, fat 17.3g, sat fat 2.8g, fibre 3.7g, salt 1.10g



Watercress,
mango and
duck salad

EVERYDAY

Steak, beetroot and asparagus salad

SERVES 2 • 20 minutes • **Easy**



250g rump steak, fat completely trimmed

asparagus 6 spears, trimmed

wild rocket 50g

cooked beetroot 4 small,

cut into wedges

FOR DRESSING

horseradish cream 1 tbsp

half-fat crème fraîche 2 tbsp

lemon 1, juiced and zested

1 Heat a non-stick frying pan and season the meat well. Brown for 3-4 minutes each side (longer if it's very thick), and allow to rest for 10 minutes. Thinly slice and set aside.

2 Blanch or grill the asparagus spears.

3 To make the dressing, whisk the horseradish, crème fraîche and lemon juice together with seasoning.

4 Assemble the plates with the beef slices, asparagus, rocket and beetroot and spoon the dressing over each.

Sprinkle the lemon zest over everything.

PER SERVING 250 kcals, protein 32.8g, carbs 11g, fat 8.6g, sat fat 3.4g, fibre 3.2g, salt 0.58g



Camargue red rice salad with feta and pine nuts

SERVES 2 • 20 minutes • **Easy**



150g Camargue red rice (look out for Merchant Gourmet and Gallo)

1 tbsp red wine vinegar

2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil

50g feta cheese, cut into cubes

1 tbsp pine nuts, toasted

2 carrots, peeled and shredded

½ small red onion, cut into half moons

flat-leaf parsley 20g, finely chopped

1 Boil the rice until al dente, drain and rinse in cold water. Tip into a bowl and toss with the vinegar, oil and seasoning.

2 Add the remaining ingredients, toss again and spoon into bowls.

PER SERVING 483 kcals, protein 11.2g, carbs 66.2g, fat 21.1g, sat fat 5.1g, fibre 3.0g, salt 0.74g

**Cannellini bean salad
with roast cherry
tomatoes and chorizo**

SERVES 2 • 30 minutes • Easy P



250g cherry tomatoes, halved
2 tbsp olive oil
1 x 400g tin cannellini beans
50g chorizo, sliced and quartered
1 small red onion, diced
1 tbsp sherry vinegar
1 tbsp honey
50g salad leaves

1 Heat oven to 180C/160C fan. Put the tomatoes on a baking tray and drizzle with some of the oil. Season and roast for 20 minutes and then remove.

2 Drain and rinse the beans. Tip into a bowl and keep aside.

3 Fry the chorizo in a non-stick pan until crisp, then drain on kitchen paper. Wipe the pan clean and add the olive oil, onion and seasoning. Cook for 5 minutes, then add the vinegar and reduce by half. Add the honey and whisk to emulsify.

4 Pour the warm dressing over the beans and mix. Add the chorizo, tomatoes and salad leaves and mix again.

PER SERVING 365 kcs, protein 16g, carbs 35.5g, fat 18.7g, sat fat 3.9g, fibre 8.6g, salt 1.71g



Bring on the butter

Embrace a healthier lifestyle with Lurpak's unique blend of low-fat spreadable butter and olive oil.

Identified by its abundance of fresh fruit, vegetables, and healthy fats, the Mediterranean diet is considered among the healthiest in the world.

Olive oil is one of those healthy fats that can protect against heart disease by lowering cholesterol levels. Indeed, monounsaturated fatty acids like these can also help regulate insulin levels and blood sugar control, which is particularly helpful for those with type 2 diabetes.

With this in mind, along with the wonderful favour olive oil provides, Lurpak has combined their spreadable lighter butter with olive oil.

Fifty per cent less fat than regular butter, but with all the flavour, Lurpak Spreadable with Olive Oil can be used directly as a spread (on bread, toast, baked potatoes etc) or in cooking. It's also suitable for vegetarians.

Butter itself contains a host of vitamins, including vitamin D for stronger bones, vitamin E to fight toxins and vitamin K to prevent heart disease, along with a number of important minerals your body needs to keep your immune system strong and healthy.

Famed for its butter, Lurpak originated in Denmark, and is defined by its luxurious creamy taste and pallor. For over a century, the Danish butter company has strived for excellence and has rigorous quality control measures in place to ensure every container of butter is of the highest caliber.

The only Danish butter available, Lurpak is now sold in 75 countries across the world, and comes in several different varieties; including slightly salted butter, organic spreadable, unsalted, crushed garlic, and now of course – Lighter Spreadable with Olive Oil.





MORE GOODNESS MORE TASTE LESS GUILT

ENJOY A NEW,
LIGHTER LURPAK WITH OLIVE OIL

LOVE FOOD WITH LURPAK



Eat well all week

These feel-good dishes are easier to make than you think!

Recipes LUCY NETHERTON

Photographs DAVID MUNNS

Mexican chicken & wild rice soup

SERVES 4 • PREP 10 mins •

COOK 20 mins **Easy**

Superhealthy Good source of vit C, counts as 2 of 5-a-day, Low fat

1 tsp olive oil
1 onion, finely chopped
1 green pepper, diced
200g sweetcorn, frozen or from a can
1-2 tbsp chipotle paste
250g ready-cooked long-grain and wild rice mix
400g can black beans in water, rinsed and drained
1.3 litres low-sodium chicken stock
2 cooked skinless chicken breasts, shredded
small bunch coriander, chopped
low-fat soured cream and reduced fat guacamole, to serve (optional)

1 Heat the oil in a large non-stick frying pan and cook the onion for 5 mins. Throw in the pepper and cook for 2 mins more, then add the sweetcorn, chipotle paste and rice. Stir well and cook for 1-2 mins.
2 Add the black beans and the stock. Bring to the boil, turn down to a simmer, then add half the chicken and coriander. Cool for 2-3 mins, then ladle into bowls.
3 Scatter over the rest of the chicken and coriander. Serve with a dollop each of guacamole and sour cream on top, if you like.

PER SERVING 347 kcals, protein 29g, carbs 45g, fat 7g, sat fat 1g, fibre 5g, sugar 5g, salt 0.48g

Make more and use the leftovers for lunches



Vietnamese seafood salad

SERVES 5 ● PREP 10 mins ● NO COOK

Easy Low fat

400g pack cooked, mixed seafood
300g pack cooked thin rice noodles
300g pack beansprouts
3 carrots, thinly sliced
1 bunch spring onions, sliced lengthways
bunch mint and coriander, leaves chopped

FOR THE DRESSING

5 tbsp rice wine vinegar
1 tsp caster sugar
1 red chilli, chopped
1 stick lemongrass, sliced
1 tbsp low sodium soy sauce

1 To make the salad, put all of the vegetables and seafood in a large bowl, reserving a few of the herbs for the top. Mix everything together, so that the seafood and noodles are combined.

2 Make the dressing by mixing all of the ingredients, toss this through the salad, then divide between 5 deep bowls or pile on to a large platter and let everyone help themselves. Scatter the reserved herbs over the top to serve.

PER SERVING 211 kcal, protein 21g, carbs 26g, fat 4g, sat fat none, fibre 4g, sugar 8g, salt 1.89g

Veggie treat



Mushroom, spinach & potato pie

SERVES 4 • PREP 15 mins •

COOK 45 mins **Easy** **V** **+**

Superhealthy Good source of folic acid and vit C; 2 of 5-a-day, Low fat

- 400g baby spinach
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 500g mushrooms, such as chestnut, shiitake and button
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 250ml beef stock (made from ½ a low sodium beef stock cube)
- 300g cooked new potatoes, cut into bite-sized pieces
- 1 tbsp grain mustard
- 1 tsp freshly grated nutmeg
- 2 heaped tbsp light crème fraîche
- 3 sheets filo pastry
- 300g each green beans and broccoli, steamed

- 1** Heat oven to 200C/180C fan. Wilt spinach in a colander by pouring a kettleful of hot water over it.
- 2** Heat half the oil in a large non-stick pan and fry mushrooms on a high heat until golden. Add garlic and cook for 1 min, then tip in stock, mustard, nutmeg and potatoes. Bubble for a few mins until reduced. Season, then remove from the heat; add crème fraîche and spinach. Pour into a pie dish and allow to cool for a few mins.
- 3** Brush filo with remaining oil, quarter sheets then loosely scrunch up and lay on top of pie filling. Bake for 20-25 mins until golden. Serve with vegetables.

PER SERVING 215 kcals, protein 9g, carbs 29g, fat 8g, sat fat 2g, fibre 5g, sugar 4g, salt 0.77g

Cooking in foil keeps the fish beautifully moist



Mediterranean fish & couscous

SERVES 2 • PREP 10 mins • COOK 20 mins **Easy** **+**

- 2 x 125g sustainable white fish fillets (such as Pollock, or any other cod)
- 2 lemons, zest and juice of 1, the other cut into wedges
- 1 red chilli, half sliced, half finely chopped
- small bunch basil, shredded
- 200g cherry tomatoes
- 100g couscous
- 2 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- ½ cucumber, diced
- 2 tbsp pitted black olives, halved

- 1** Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Take one small sheet of foil, about A4 size, and put one fish fillet on top. Season the fish, then drizzle with half

- of the lemon juice and zest, half the sliced chillies and half of the basil.
- 2** Halve 4 of the tomatoes and put these around the fish. Place another sheet of foil on top and fold the edges together to seal. Repeat with the other piece of fish and transfer to a baking sheet. Cook for 15-18 mins until the bag has puffed up (or cook on the barbecue).
 - 3** While the fish is cooking pour 100ml of boiling water over the couscous, cover, then leave to swell for 5 mins. Chop the rest of the tomatoes and mix with the couscous, balsamic, cucumber, the remaining basil, lemon juice, zest and olives. Season and serve alongside the fish with the lemon wedges on the side for squeezing over.

PER SERVING 263 kcals, protein 26g, carbs 34g, fat 4g, sat fat 1g, fibre 2g, sugar 9g, salt 0.52g

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Mediterranean tonight?

Fresh, Med-inspired flavours offer the perfect inspiration for simple, yet delicious, family suppers
Recipes LUCY NETHERTON Photographs WILL HEAP

TIP

The parmigiana dish also works really well with turkey fillets or boneless pork chops. Simply adapt the recipe depending on what you've got in the fridge.

Chicken parmigiana

SERVES 4 • PREP 15 mins •

COOK 15 mins **Easy** 

Superhealthy Good source of calcium, counts as 1 of 5-a-day

2 large, skinless chicken breasts, halved through the middle

2 eggs, beaten

75g breadcrumbs

75g Parmesan, grated

1 tbsp olive oil

2 garlic cloves, crushed

½ x 690ml jar passata

1 tsp caster sugar

1 tsp dried oregano

½ 125g ball light mozzarella, torn

1 Place the chicken breasts between cling film sheets and bash out with a rolling pin until they are about 3mm thick. Dip in the egg, then breadcrumbs, mixed with half the Parmesan. Set aside on a plate in the fridge while you make the sauce.

2 Heat oil and cook garlic for 1 min, then tip in passata, sugar and oregano. Season and simmer for 5-10 mins.

3 Heat grill to High and cook the chicken for 5 mins each side, then remove. Pour the tomato sauce into a shallow ovenproof dish and top with the chicken. Scatter over the mozzarella and remaining Parmesan and grill for 3-4 mins until the cheese has melted and the sauce is bubbling. Serve with vegetables or salad and some pasta or potatoes, if you like.

PER SERVING 327 kcals, protein 33g, carbs 22g, fat 13g, sat fat 5g, fibre 1g, sugar 5g, salt 1.31g



Creamy seafood stew

SERVES 4 • PREP 5 mins • COOK 25 mins

Easy  Low fat

1 tbsp olive oil
1 onion, chopped
2 celery sticks, chopped
1 garlic clove, crushed
175ml white wine
300ml/½pt chicken stock
1 tbsp cornflour, mixed to a paste with 1 tbsp cold water
400g bag frozen mixed seafood, defrosted
small bunch dill, chopped
5 tbsp half-fat crème fraîche
garlic bread, to serve

1 Heat the oil in a large frying pan and cook the onion and celery until soft but not coloured, about 10 mins. Throw in the garlic and cook for 1 min more. Pour in the wine and simmer on a high heat until most has disappeared.

2 Pour in the stock and cornflour mix and simmer for 5-10 mins, stirring often until thickened. Season, then add the seafood and most of the dill. Simmer for a few mins until piping hot, then stir in the crème fraîche.

3 Meanwhile, cook the garlic bread following pack instructions. Divide the stew into warm bowls and scatter with the remaining dill. Serve with garlic bread for dipping into the stew.

PER SERVING 270 kcals, protein 31g, carbs 11g, fat 9g, sat fat 3g, fibre 1g, sugar 6g, salt 2.22g

TIP If you're not keen on all types of seafood, just use prawns and some cubes of salmon or white fish instead.



EVERYDAY MEDITERRANEAN



Peppered mackerel, new potato & watercress salad

SERVES 6 • PREP 15 • COOK 15 mins

Easy

750g baby new potatoes, larger ones halved

5 tbsp light mayonnaise

small bunch chives, snipped

100g bag watercress

270g pack peppered mackerel fillets

1 Cook the potatoes in plenty of boiling salted water until tender, about 15 mins. Drain and allow to cool for 10 mins.

Make the dressing by mixing the mayo with most of the chives.

2 Scatter half the watercress across a big platter or plate, chop the rest roughly and mix with half of the mackerel, the potatoes and mayo. Toss so that everything is covered in the dressing.

3 Pile the mackerel-potato mix on top of the watercress, then top with the rest of the mackerel and chives.

PER SERVING 286 kcals, protein 11g, carbs 22g, fat 18g, sat fat 4g, fibre 2g, sugar 2g, salt 1.52g



Mushroom & goat's cheese calzone

SERVES 2 • PREP 10 mins plus rising •

COOK 20 mins

220g pack pizza base mix

2 tsp olive oil

250g mixed mushrooms, such as chestnut, Portobello, porcini or shiitake

1 fat garlic clove, crushed

pinch chilli flakes

1 tsp rosemary leaves, finely chopped

1 tbsp half-fat crème fraîche

100g goat's cheese

rocket, to serve

1 Make up the pizza dough following pack instructions. Meanwhile, make the filling. Heat 1 tsp oil in a large frying pan and fry the mushrooms until golden, about 8 mins. Add garlic, chilli and rosemary and cook for 1 min more. Stir in crème fraîche and 1 tbsp water and remove from heat.

2 Heat oven to 220C/200C fan/gas 7. Roll out the dough to a 30cm-diameter circle. Spread the mushroom mix across half of the circle, leaving a 2cm border from the edge, and scatter on the goat's cheese. Fold over and press to seal.

3 Brush with remaining oil, transfer to a baking sheet and cook for 15-20 mins until risen and golden. Cut in halves

and serve with rocket, if you like.

PER SERVING 484 kcals, protein 20g, carbs 66g, fat 17g, sat fat 7g, fibre 7g, sugar 4g, salt 3.21g

MAKE IT DIFFERENT

Try one of these other easy fillings

Pesto, mozzarella & Parma ham

Fill with 3 tbsp pesto, 125g ball mozzarella, torn and 4 slices Parma ham.

Spinach & ricotta

Wilt a 200g bag baby spinach, squeeze water out and season. Shred, then fold through 250g ricotta, freshly grated nutmeg and 50g grated Parmesan cheese.

Mozzarella & chilli meatballs

Squeeze the meat out of 4 pork sausages and mix with ½ tsp chilli flakes. Roll into balls and fry for 5-10 mins until brown. Tip in 200ml tomato pasta sauce and some seasoning. Cool a little, then use as a filling with 125g ball mozzarella, torn.

Pasta & meatball soup with cheesy croutons

SERVES 4 ● PREP 5 mins ● COOK 35 mins **Easy** 

1 tbsp olive oil
300g pack ready-made mini meatballs
2 x 400g cans chopped tomatoes
300ml/½pt milk
1 tbsp dried oregano
200g pasta shapes
8 thin wholemeal baguette slices
50g cheddar, grated
small bunch basil, torn

1 Heat the oil in a large, deep frying pan and fry the meatballs for 5-10 mins until browned. Tip in the tomatoes, milk, 200ml water and oregano and simmer for 10-15 mins, until the soup thickens a little.

2 Pour in the pasta shapes and simmer until cooked – follow pack timings. Meanwhile, make the cheesy croutons. Heat grill to High, pop the baguette slices on a baking tray and top with the cheese. Grill until melted, keep warm.

3 When the pasta is cooked, remove the soup from the heat and stir in the basil. Divide between bowls and serve with the basil and cheesy croutons on top.

PER SERVING 530 kcals, protein 33g, carbs

64g, fat 17g, sat fat 7g, fibre 4g, sugar

10g, salt 1.24g

MAKE YOUR OWN MEATBALLS

Combine **250g lean beef mince** with **2 slices white bread**, whizzed into breadcrumbs, **1 chopped small onion** and some salt and pepper. Shape into meatballs. Use as directed in the recipe or make double and freeze some for later.



A RARE EVENING

A picture-perfect setting, free-flowing bubbly and a cooking class with expert chefs. It can only mean one thing – another incredible Food Club event!

Last month's BBC Good Food ME Food Club masterclass was held at the stunning Desert Palm Retreat. Members were welcomed to the fairytale alfresco setting with glasses of bubbly. The flickering candles against the backdrop of the lush green polo fields and quirky retro rickshaw-style chairs dotted around, set the stage for the culinary demonstration by Executive Chef Steven van Dyun. Large screens placed around the venue made it easy for everyone to get a good look at the goings-on, as they sipped on the free-flowing Tattinger, and sampled delicious canapés.

The chefs cooked up a gourmet three-course menu of pan seared scallops, an open seafood ravioli and chocolate marquise. Guests also got to sample bite-sized portions of the dishes as they were passed around on trays. In between the demos, the chefs shared their expert tips and tricks, and answered various cooking questions. The evening rounded off with raffle draws for exciting prizes such as dinner and spa vouchers at the resort. Some of the guests chose to stay back for a delicious set menu dinner at Rare restaurant.

Here are some vignettes of the evening, and the recipes from the demo, that guests got to take home in their goody bags.



Pan seared scallops



Seafood ravioli



Chocolate marquise





The cooking demo showcased the menu of Rare restaurant



Rare offers an elegant ambience



“The sweetness of the scallops are a nice combination with the simple sauce.”

STARTER



Lucky winners got spa and dinner vouchers

PAN SEARED CANADIAN SCALLOP

SERVES 4

12pc whole scallops	10ml cream
100g potato, peeled	5g unsalted butter
140ml celeriac puree	Season to taste
60ml orange reduction	For Orange Emulsion
12pc. spring onion	200ml Orange Juice
16 orange segments, chopped	4 orange segments
10g unsalted butter	40g sugar
Seasoning to taste	20g unsalted butter
For Celeriac Puree	1pc star anise
100g celeriac	1pc cinnamon sticks
40ml milk	

- 1 Slice the potato into thin strips and place on a tray lined with parchment paper, making sure it does not touch each other, then place another parchment paper on top before placing a metal baking sheet on top of it all. Bake for 5 hours at 120C.
- 2 Sear the scallops on a grill and finish in a pan with butter and seasoning until golden. Quickly sauté the spring onion strips.
- 3 Simmer cleaned and diced celeriac in milk until it becomes soft. Gently, remove the celeriac from the milk and blend with cream until smooth.
- 4 Reduce orange juice with star anise and cinnamon stick, add sugar and simmer till it obtains a glazy thick consistency. Emulsify with butter and add chopped orange segments
- 5 To plate, draw a line with the orange butter and celeriac purée, place the scallop along with the spring onion and sauce on the plate. Finally break the potato for a rustic look and place it on the plate to finish.

TIP: Cook the scallops on a very hot pan to sear them nicely, an unheated pan will stew them.



Guests enjoyed sampling the delicious dishes



OPEN HERB SEAFOOD RAVIOLI

SERVES 4



150g lobster tail, cut in half length ways

1 portion butter emulsion (40ml water & 200g butter)

2 pasta sheets

60ml lobster sauce

50g spinach

20g fennel, shaved

4 Lasagna sheets

1/2 cup yellow onions, finely chopped

1/4 cup celery, finely chopped

1/4 cup carrots, chopped

2 tbsp shallots, minced

1 tbsp garlic, minced

2 tbsp, bleached all-purpose flour

1/4 cup cognac or other brandy

400g whole lobster shell (the shell from 1kg of whole lobster should be sufficient).

4 cups fish or chicken stock, or water

3 tbsp tomato paste

1 tsp salt

1/4 tsp paprika

1/8 tsp cayenne

For the Lobster Sauce:

(This makes enough for 20 portions; it can be frozen for later use).

1 tbsp vegetable oil

4 tbsp unsalted butter

1 To make the cauliflower puree, simmer diced cauliflower in milk until soft. Remove once soft and blend with cream until smooth. Season to taste. Refrigerate until ready to use.

2 For the lobster sauce, heat the oil and melt butter in a medium heavy stockpot over medium-high heat. Add the onions, celery and carrots and cook until soft, about 4 minutes. Add the shallots and garlic and cook until softened (about 2 mins). Stir in the flour and continue to stir until the mixture is a light blond color, about 2 minutes. Add the brandy and stir for 30 seconds, scraping the bottom of the pot with a wooden spoon to release the browned bits.

3 Add the lobster shells and stir in the fish stock. Bring to a boil over high heat, and then reduce to medium-low heat. Add the tomato paste, salt, paprika, and cayenne. Simmer uncovered, stirring regularly until the sauce is lightly thickened, about 1 hour. Strain the sauce through a fine-mesh strainer into a medium saucepan. Add the cream and bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Reduce to medium heat after it has been boiled and simmer briskly for 15 minutes until reduced to 3 cups. Season to taste.

4 Poach the lobster tail meat in a butter emulsion. In the meantime, place one piece of cooked pasta sheet on the bottom of the plate. Sauté spinach and place on the pasta, add cauliflower puree and arrange lobster tail on top. Sprinkle shaved fennel around the plate. Top with the 2nd pasta sheet, spoon lobster sauce neatly on plate and serve.



6 Berries are the perfect complement to this chocolate dessert. 9

CHOCOLATE MARQUISE

SERVES 4



165g dark chocolate

70g unsalted butter

70g caster sugar

25g cocoa

2.5 egg yolks

210ml double cream

4 tbsp de-hydrated raspberries

4 tsp chocolate pearls

1 Line a small loaf tin with cling film (the mixture should fill the tin).

2 Put the dark chocolate, butter, sugar, and cocoa in a saucepan, and melt over a very low heat, stirring.

3 Put the egg yolks in a bowl and pour in the melted chocolate, stirring constantly. In a separate bowl whisk the cream until stiff but has a slight trail when tilted upside down.

4 Fold the cream into the chocolate mixture until combined and pour into the prepared tin.

5 Chill in the refrigerator for 2 hours. Once set, carefully turn out on to a plate removing the cling film.

6 Using a hot knife, cut into slices and place on a plate. Sprinkle de-hydrated raspberries on top and chocolate pearls on the side.

TIP: When melting chocolate, make sure no water goes into the mixture or it will seize.

desert palm
Dubai

Desert Palm Retreat is an exclusive luxury resort, located on the outskirts of Dubai, overlooking a polo estate. Sophisticated design meets contemporary Arabia in this chic hideaway. The resort is home to three dining outlets, including gourmet steakhouse, Rare. Visit www.peraquum.com, or call 04-3238888.

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* Chef's Bites

Interviews with culinary experts from the UAE and beyond, plus exclusive recipes



* **42** Fusion food, Peter Gordon-style



* **44** Andy Campbell talks sustainability



* **56** Farah's mediterranean feast



Roasted veal tenderloin,
carrot and anis puree with
sugar snaps and espresso
sauce, recipe p62

Global kitchen

Fusion cuisine may have acquired a bit of a bad rap in gourmet circles, but it isn't deserved. Celebrity chef Peter Gordon tells Sudeshna Ghosh why.



Fusion in food is probably as old as civilisation itself – we just didn't call it that, back then. Peter Gordon, widely known as the Father of Fusion – a title he's learned to live with, not necessarily something he'd choose to call himself – finds combining different flavours from around the world comes naturally to him. "I don't see why we shouldn't use the beautiful characteristics of different cuisines into our food," says Peter, who was in the UAE recently, conducting a series of cooking classes at Jones the Grocer.

"I base my cuisine on the belief that ingredients from different cultures can work in harmony," he explains. "My food is based on flavours, rather than historical bearing. It is how I picture the world, as a community. That is what my grandmother brought me up to believe." Having grown up in bountiful New Zealand, where "we gardened, fished, and butchered our own produce," Peter's appreciation of fresh, beautiful food started early. "I made my first cookbook when I was four, with snippets from magazines," he reveals. Travelling to Melbourne at 18, and across Asia thereafter, proved to be a turning point in his culinary life. "I was like a kid in a toy shop, discovering all these different flavours," he says.

South-east Asia has had the strongest influence on his food, with its clean, refreshing flavours holding a strong appeal for him. His inventive habit of incorporating these flavours into classical dishes has

made his restaurants in London, Auckland and Istanbul (The Providores, Kopapa and Tapas Room in London; Dine in New Zealand, and Muzedechanga in Istanbul where he is consultant chef) into award-winning eateries.

No wonder he reveals his favourite cuisine, without much thought, to be the Malay and Singaporean style. "I love the balance of sweet and salty, the subtle herbs, and the texture that sort of cuisine offers," says Peter. Middle Eastern flavours are also something he is familiar with, frequently using ingredients like sumac and zaatar in his cooking. So, even though he credits travel, eating out and visiting local markets as his main source of inspiration, his recent visit to UAE was less about learning about the local cuisine, and more about sharing his own expertise at his cooking classes.

His top tips for home chefs keen to try their own hand at fusion cooking is simple. "Have a good understanding of the classics, then deviate. It is important to understand the fundamentals, learn the techniques, and practice cooking," says Peter.

So, once you've mastered the basics, it's easy to experiment. But, are there any rules of thumb we need to remember before we get experimenting in our kitchens? "I don't believe in rules," Peter says. "The only rule I follow in the kitchen is safety rules!"

Here, he shares recipes of some of his rule-breaking fusion dishes, to inspire innovation in home chefs.



Deep-fried egg with lime chilli dressing, garam masala and crispy shallots

SERVES 4

- 4 eggs
- 2 juicy limes
- 1 tbsp grated pale palm sugar
- ½ bird's eye chilli, thinly sliced (any other red chilli will also do)
- 1 tsp fish sauce
- 1 small pc ginger, finely julienned
- 1 tbsp garam masala
- A small handful of fresh coriander leaves
- 1 spring onion, finely sliced
- 1 tbsp crispy shallots (available from Asian food stores or can be made at home simply by deep-frying chopped shallots in hot oil)

1 Boil eggs for 4½ minutes. Peel then place in a bowl of cold water.

2 Finely grate the zest from half the lime. Add the palm sugar and chilli and mash it together. Squeeze the juice from the limes over this mixture (around 40–50 ml) and mix until the sugar has dissolved. Stir in the fish sauce and ginger and keep aside.

3 Heat 6 cm of vegetable oil to 180°C. Take the eggs from the water and pat dry. Carefully lower them into the oil and move them around a little to colour them evenly. Remove them from the oil, place on kitchen paper to absorb excess oil, then roll on a plate scattered with the garam masala.

4 Place eggs on individual plates and scatter with the coriander and spring onion. Drizzle on the lime chilli dressing and finish with the crispy shallots.

CHEF'S BITES FUSION FOOD

Spiced berry and vanilla risotto

SERVES 4

200g risotto rice
60g unsalted butter
½ vanilla bean, split lengthways
2 green cardamom, squashed slightly
with the side of a knife
1 stick of cinnamon
2 cloves
100g mascarpone
6 tbsp icing sugar
150g raspberries
150g strawberries, hulled and halved
Handful fresh berries, for garnish

1 Rinse the rice well in a sieve under warm running water. Place in a medium sized pot with 625ml hot water, and add the butter, vanilla and spices.

2 Bring to the boil then simmer for 15 minutes with the lid on.

3 When the rice is almost cooked, mix in the mascarpone and sugar then gently stir in the berries. Put the lid back on, take off the heat and leave for 5 minutes in a warm place.

4 Gently stir again and serve with extra berries scattered on top.

Seared tuna on nori sauce with green mango and coconut salad

SERVES 4, 3 PIECES EACH

500g tuna loin
2tbsp sesame oil
8 sheets nori
80ml mirin
80ml sake
4tbsp soy sauce
2tbsp balsamic vinegar
½ green mango
¼ fresh coconut
20 mint leaves
10 sprigs of coriander
2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
3 limes, quartered

1 Cut the tuna into 5cm x 3cm batons (approximately). Rub with the sesame oil then sear in a hot pan on all sides, for one minute in total. Immediately plunge

into a bowl of iced water and leave for 5 minutes, then drain and pat dry.

2 Toast four of the nori sheets over a medium open flame until it goes dark green. Crumble the toasted nori into a bowl along with the untoasted sheets.

3 Bring the mirin, sake, soy and balsamic vinegar to a simmer in a medium-sized pan, then stir in the nori and cook for 20 seconds, stirring constantly. Blitz into a paste with a stick blender and leave to cool.

4 Peel and julienne the mango. Grate the coconut. Tear the mint leaves. Pick the leaves from the coriander, then cut the stalks into 1-cm long pieces. Mix everything together.

5 Slice the tuna 5 mm thick. Dollop the nori sauce onto your plates along with a mound of mango salad. Lay the sliced tuna on the sauce, sprinkle with flaky sea salt and drizzle with the olive oil. Serve with a lime wedge.



Back to basics



Wondering how to eat greener? Making sustainable food choices is easier than you think. Nicola Monteath finds out more from Andy Campbell, Dubai based chef and champion of fresh, local and seasonal food.



Do you love indulging in Blue-fin tuna and Chilean sea bass when dining out? Delicious as they may be, did you know that these species are slowly becoming extinct? These are just two out of a long list of seafood on an endangered list that conscientious diners should avoid.

Eating sustainably isn't just about missing out on the good stuff, though. It's about making smart choices, being aware of where your food is coming from, and opting for local, seasonal, and fresh and organic as far as possible.

Sustainability can be defined as the method of harvesting and using resources wisely in order to avoid it from being endangered. "The reason we need to re-think what we eat is for the sake of our grandchildren - what are they going to eat if we run out of food in the future?" asks Andy Campbell, founder of gourmet catering company *Chef Andy Campbell*, who actively advocates shopping and eating locally. Andy opened his own restaurant in London when he was just 23, and has since worked at top restaurants in England. He currently works as a private chef-for-hire in Dubai, having built up a reputation for sourcing supplies from farms in the region, and using only sustainable, fresh and seasonal produce in his cooking.

Andy believes that the two main components behind sustainability are 'good animal husbandry and sensibility'. By sensibility, he means making sensible choices that take into account health and diet requirements, as well as taste and budget. "I prefer shopping at local supermarkets like Union Co-op and Al Maya, as they have an abundant variety of fresh produce at affordable prices," says Andy.

So is sustainable eating an expensive habit to sustain? "That is definitely a myth," says Andy. "If you are willing to make a change, use your time wisely and look around to find

produce that suits your needs. Fresh produce sourced from local farms is not only cheaper, but also tastes better."

Eating organic – while better for health, as it is chemical-free – is what can often make grocery bills skyrocket, so Andy advises to shop selectively for organic produce, wherever possible. But, according to him, more important than organic is eating local and seasonal.

To incorporate more local produce in your diet, Andy suggests opting for fruits and vegetables grown within the region. Since not everything is grown locally, always try and choose fruit or veg from countries that are geographically closer – such as Iran, India and Pakistan.

He warns to steer away from 'glossy packaging'. "Imported produce may look bright and attractive, but they can contain tons of pesticides, fertilisers and chemicals, and are also usually shipped in from thousands of miles away," he says.

Another key aspect of sustainable food is seasonality. While it is now possible to get all sorts of produce all year round, food that is in season inevitably tastes better – and usually costs less too.

For example, in summer, watermelons, celery, loomi (dried lemons), honeydew melon, chillies and curly endives are grown in farms around here. "Dates will also be in season very soon, they taste great in desserts or just eaten raw, and are an integral part of Middle Eastern cooking, so I will be using a lot of that in the coming months," Andy adds.

To educate us on sustainable food, Andy created a three-course menu for *BBC Good Food ME*, using only local, seasonal ingredients. Try these at home and see how simple and delicious 'eating green' can be.



Thai style prawn salad with melon and cucumber

SERVES 4

Juice of 2 limes

2 tsp palm sugar

1 tsp garlic, finely chopped

1 large shallot, finely chopped

2 tsp fish sauce

Red chilli to taste, finely diced

250g king prawns, cooked

2 cucumbers (Lebanese)

1 honeydew melon, cubed

1 cantaloupe, cubed

A few micro herbs, for garnish

1 Mix the first seven ingredients together and set it aside for 30 minutes before serving.

2 Peel the dark green skin of the cucumber; trim the ends and peel lengthwise to make ribbons, season with salt and strain in a sieve.

3 To serve, place cucumber on the plate (to form a nest like shape), add cubed melon, top up with the prawn mix and garnish with a few chopped nuts and micro herbs.

Fishy Business

EWS-WWF (Emirates Wildlife Society-World Wildlife Fund) launched a consumer awareness campaign in April 2010 known as 'Choose Wisely', to raise awareness about the heavy exploitation of fish and seafood resources within the UAE. The campaign, carried out in select supermarkets (including Lulu and Choithrams) and hotels, advises people on what seafood to choose, by categorising them under the traffic light coded system, with red standing for highly endangered; orange for species that aren't very high risk but aren't recommended; and green for the most sustainable choices. For more information, visit www.choosewisely.ae.

CHEF'S BITES SUSTAINABILITY



Bharat spiced Black Sole, pan roasted with surf calms

SERVES 4

150g of 4 black sole fillets, skinned (This fish is a meatier version than lemon or Dover sole found in Europe).

1 tbsp bharat spice (available in most supermarkets)

2 tbsp vegetable oil

A few knobs of butter

2 handfuls of clams

1 large tomato, deseeded and diced

1 clove garlic, diced

2 tbsp basil leaves, finely sliced

1 tbsp olive oil to sauté

1-2 tbsp lemon juice

2-3 medium potatoes

Handful of rocket leaves, chopped

A little honey or date syrup to glaze the fish

1 Sprinkle the bharat spice over both sides of the fillets, season with salt and black pepper.

2 Heat a heavy based frying pan on a medium heat, add the vegetable oil and cook

the fillets for 1 to 2 minutes until golden brown. Turn the fillets over, add a couple of knobs of butter and cook for a further 1-2 minutes, spoon the melted butter over the fillets. Note, they will feel springy to touch. Remove from pan, brush with honey or date syrup to glaze. Keep warm on a plate covered with cling film.

3 Wipe the pan clean with kitchen paper and return to a high heat, add olive oil and sauté clams, cover with a lid and allow them to steam open for a couple of minutes. Remove the lid and shake the pan.

4 Add the garlic, stir in a little butter, lemon juice, the diced tomato and basil.

5 Boil and mash potatoes and combine with chopped rocket leaves.

6 Serve the sole fillets on mashed potato mix, garnish the plate with the clams and pour sauce on top.



Potted pumpkin served with clotted cream

SERVES 4-5

1kg (2-3cm) pumpkin cubes, skinned

200g local honey (to taste)

Lemon juice

100g clotted cream

75g pistachio nuts, nipped

1 tbsp sugar

1 On a hot grill, toast pistachios with a tablespoon of sugar and set aside.

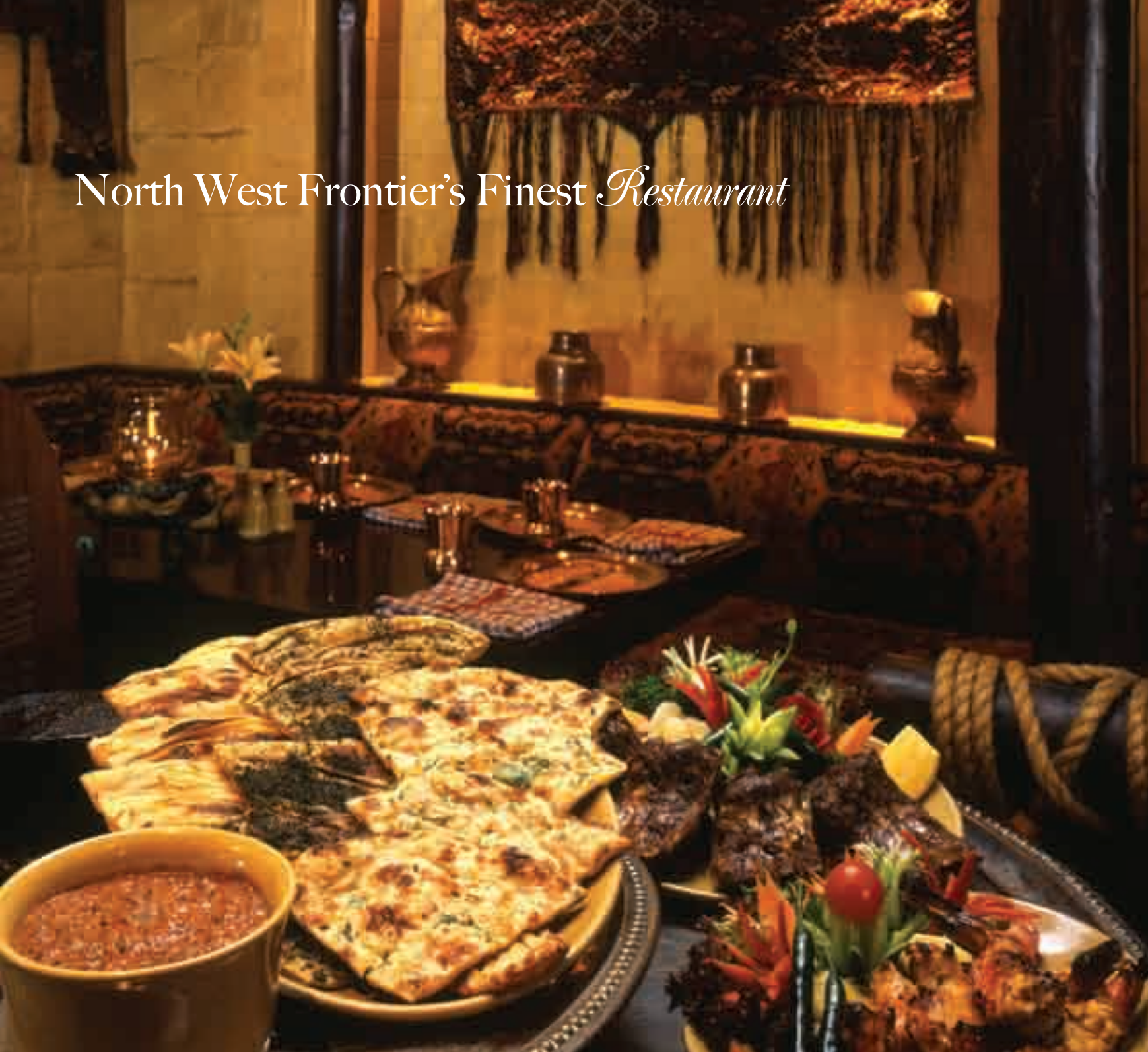
2 In a saucepan, boil the pumpkin with 125ml water, cover with a lid on a low heat for 20 minutes.

3 When soft, remove the lid, add honey and reduce till the liquid is absorbed.

4 Set aside to cool and then whizz with a handheld blender. Pass through a sieve and pour into glasses.

5 Refrigerate until cold, serve with a good dollop of clotted cream and garnish with pistachios.

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UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

New chef on the block

We chat with Laurent Pommey, executive chef of the newly opened Park Hyatt Abu Dhabi hotel, to find out what he's bringing to the capital's culinary scene.



When someone who counts the likes of Jacques Chirac, Kylie Minogue, Michael Schumacher and Swedish royalty as people he has cooked for, you'd expect his inspiration to come from something loftier than his grandmother's kitchen. But that is who Laurent credits for his passion for "simple, yet beautiful food". With a foundation in classical French cuisine, Laurent has over ten years of experience in cooking at various restaurants around the world, from Australia to France – including at the Michelin star Le Bernadin. As Abu Dhabi's newest culinary star, he wants to see his penchant for fresh, local and seasonal, become the new buzzwords in the region. We find out more:

Q What is the style of cuisine we can expect from the hotel?

A When it comes to cuisine at Hyatt, we try to keep it simple yet authentic and offer a glimpse of the location through incorporating local ingredients in our kitchens.

Q Tell us a little bit about the different food and beverage concepts at the hotel?

A We have three restaurants: The Café, the Park Bar & Grill and Beach House, as well as The Library, our contemporary tea lounge. The Café serves Arabic and international cuisine. The Beach House is a relaxed beachfront venue serving Mediterranean-inspired food. And the Park Bar & Grill, our signature restaurant, serves

charcoal-grilled meat and a variety of selected seafood, with a subtle touch of Asian cuisine.

Q How would you define your culinary style?

A Sustainability is the main focus in my kitchen. I have a true passion for using locally sourced products, and giving a flavour of the location you are in. Especially considering the UAE offers such a wide selection of natural products, I intend to keep developing this idea more and more..

Q Isn't sourcing local produce more of a challenge in this part of the world, compared to the other countries you've worked in?

A In fact, the availability of fresh, locally sourced products here is higher compared to say, Australia or France. Abu Dhabi and Dubai offer an amazingly rich platform for restaurants, with huge selections of diverse ingredients available locally.

Q What do you think you are bringing to Abu Dhabi that isn't here already?

A Food cooked simply using the best locally sourced products – I can not say this enough. I believe that currently the competition in the industry is so high that everybody is trying too hard when it comes to the food. The result is mostly a disappointing meal cooked and served without passion. The Abu Dhabi food scene consists of a very large platform of restaurants,

but without a special focus on local products. The fact is that more and more people are being conscientious about eating healthily or living a more 'green' lifestyle. Sourcing local ingredients that are still very fresh and did not travel half way around the globe would definitely make a big difference to the Abu Dhabi food scene, and I truly hope it will happen soon. Now would also be the right time for a modern Arabic chef from Abu Dhabi to shine and be under the spotlight.

Q What can we look forward to from the hotel in the near future?

A We will be hosting the very first Masters of Food & Wine event here in June. It is celebrated in all the Park Hyatt Hotels around the world, four times every year, at the same time with the exact same idea: local flavours. I am particularly excited about the Sustainable Grill Dinner where I will serve the dinner and explain my ideas about the sustainability concept

Q Finally, how would you sum up your food philosophy?

A Keeping it simple is the best statement and concept you could stick to when it comes to food. When you cook food, you serve more than a piece of grilled meat or mushroom sauce, it is about sharing passion, simplicity, involvement and a true feeling of fulfilment when your guest leaves the table with a smile. That is what makes me thankful every day for what I do.



Steamed sea bream

SERVES 2

600g Fresh sea bream fillet,
deboned and clean

FOR THE SAUCE:

20g ginger, fine grated
50g white onion, sliced
150g shitake mushrooms
50ml soy sauce (Kikkoman)
50ml sesame oil
1l fish stock
5ml Fish sauce
1g pepper black whole

10g big red chili, sliced
75g pak choi leaves
15g shallot sliced
50g spring onion, sliced
50g white onion, sliced

GARNISH:

25g leeks, sliced in julienne
25g chili sliced in julienne
10g coriander leaves

- 1** Sweat the onion, ginger and mushrooms. Add the other ingredients for the sauce and cook it for 40 min. on low heat.
- 2** Slice the vegetables and place portion wise in a steam basket. Add 300g of the fish filet on top. Place the filled basket in a water bath and steam for around 7 to 8 min.
- 3** Take off the vegetables and fish with a pallet knife and plate it. Pour mushroom sauce on top and garnish.



Wagyu rib eye steak

SERVES 2

2x300g wagyu beef steak

20ml olive oil

40g salt

40g pepper

FOR THE GARNISH:

80g rocket salad
40ml lemon juice
20ml olive oil
20g salt
20g pepper
2 shallot
40ml olive oil
20g maldon sea salt
40g thyme

- 1** Put the shallot in a fire safe tray and marinate with olive oil, salt and thyme.
- 2** Cover with aluminium foil and bake in the oven till is butter soft. Allow it to cool down and then take off the peel. Brush the steak with olive oil and season with salt and pepper.
- 3** Grill according to preference on a charcoal grill. Marinate the rocket salad with olive oil lemon juice, salt and pepper.
- 4** Arrange on a plate alongside the grilled steak to serve.

Gianduja parfait with citrus fruit compote

SERVES 2

2 egg yolks
15g sugar
30g honey
10ml milk
35g gianduja (hazelnut chocolate)
20g melted dark chocolate
170g semi whipped cream
10g roasted nuts, chopped
0.5g each gelatin sheet

- 1** Soak the gelatin in cold water. In the meantime, heat up the egg yolks and sugar. Remove from heat and whisk (using an electric mixer) until fluffy.
- 2** Heat the honey, milk, chocolate and gianduja, dissolve gelatin adding all the ingredients to the mixture.
- 3** Fold nuts and semi whipped cream into the mixture. Pour mixture into silpats/moulds and freeze for 3 hours.
- 4** Serve along with citrus compote and assemble as shown in the picture.



MY KITCHEN

Marcus Wareing

When he gets home, Michelin star TV chef Marcus Wareing wants a kitchen that he can relax in with his family. He gives **Vanessa Berridge** a tour. Photographs GEOFF WILKINSON



The Corian work surface is at the heart of family life: the children sit on bar stools as their parents cook

Michelin-starred chef Marcus Wareing has garnered many awards for his modern, theatrical take on traditional French cuisine. He was born in Southport in 1970 and worked first at The Savoy, London, before moving to Le Gavroche to work for Albert Roux.

In 1993, he became sous chef at Gordon Ramsay's Aubergine. Six years later, he opened Petrus at The Berkeley Hotel for Ramsay. Then, in 2008, he relaunched it in his own right as Marcus Wareing at The Berkeley. His latest venture is the Gilbert Scott restaurant at the St Pancras Renaissance Hotel, which opened last year.

Marcus, who is a regular on various BBC food shows, and lives in Wandsworth, south London, with his wife, Jane, and their three children: Jake, ten; Archie, seven; and Jessie, four.

Tell us about your home and the kitchen's design

We moved to this Victorian house in December 2010. It had been a relatively normal-sized house until a developer rebuilt it and doubled its size. When we first saw it, all the structural work had been done and the shape was there, but there was nothing in the kitchen apart from the flooring and energy-efficient ceiling lighting. Had we come six months later, it would have been finished. But as it was, Jane and I were able to get involved with planning the kitchen.

What appealed to you about that?

It was a blank canvas. Moving here was my first chance to make a domestic kitchen of my own. We've previously bought places where the kitchen had been done, and, because Jane is as

involved in my work as I am, we've never had time to renovate a house from scratch. This house was ideal because we were able to put our own stamp on it without the hassle of overseeing builders and extensions.

What were your main considerations?

As a chef, I had an idea of what I was looking for. My first priority was the central island – it's the first thing you see when you come through the front door and it's important to make sense of such a large area. Apart from that, the cooker is the main feature. I chose a Maestro range by Bonnet – in keeping with the size of kitchen, we needed a large cooker rather than a dinky stove. It has an oven, gas burners, a grill and griddle, and I also put in induction hobs for Jane



The large sitting area with television is tucked into a cosy corner. Hard-wearing furnishings are practical for children and pick up the colour scheme

However, as the oven takes a long time to warm up and uses a lot of power, I had a conventional fan oven installed in the wall units to make it easier for her when preparing simple meals for the kids.

How did you design the kitchen?

It was actually done by the developer's designer, David Fern of CID Interior (cidinterior.com), but we had lengthy discussions with him. I wanted to keep it clean, minimalistic and light.

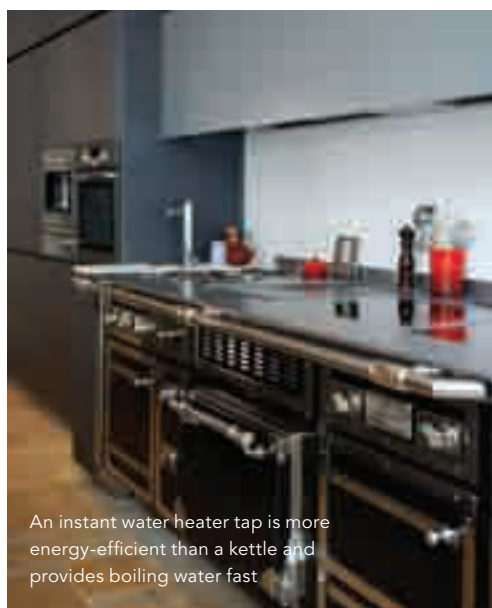
Given that we've got young children, we've been quite daring in choosing creams and greys. But we've picked hard-wearing fabrics and leather for the kitchen chairs so we can wipe them clean. There are some things, like the limestone flooring, which I might not have chosen, but I'm not a designer. I like having their input and being tempted to do things I wouldn't normally do myself.

Do you use the kitchen for work?

I don't use it as a test kitchen, although I tend to do shoots here rather than at work. It's primarily a home kitchen – I can cook at weekends without making a chore of it. It's all about great ingredients, simplicity, speed and efficiency.

What do you love about this kitchen?

It's a fantastic open space where I can work as a chef and where the family can hang out together. It works pretty well and I wouldn't change anything.



An instant water heater tap is more energy-efficient than a kettle and provides boiling water fast

MARCUS'S TIPS:

- Consider the three key areas in any kitchen: the cooker, the kitchen table and the food preparation area. As a chef, I always ask, where is the fridge? Where is the dishwasher? Where are my pots and pans?
- You need to have the fridge, bin, preparation area and cooker close together, so you spend less time running around and more time actually preparing food.
- Think about how you actually work. That is crucial.
- Make sure your rubbish bins are large enough – they always tend to be too small.
- Extraction should also be a priority. You need to make sure that fumes go straight outside.

GET THE LOOK



While expensive, this stylish, eco-friendly and feature-rich Hansgrohe Pura Vida mixer tap, Dh8,670, has an LED indicator for water temperature.

Create a striking architectural effect in the kitchen with this Fusion ASHOKA pendant lamp from THE One, Dhs19,995.



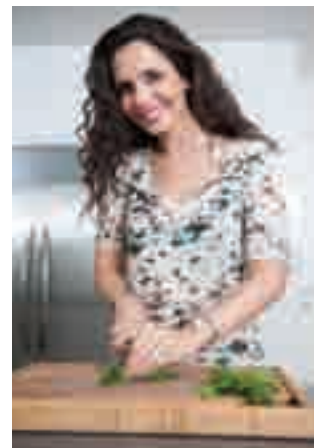
A good-sized chopping board is one of Marcus's must-haves, and this set of three from Home Centre (knife not included), Dhs49, won't break the bank.



This beautiful CRISS hurricane lamp, Dhs 369 from THE One, looks great as a vase full of flowers as well as a candle-holder.



A pull-out larder unit offers neat-looking accessible storage space. Dhs8940, from Hacker.



Warm Lentil Salad

SERVES 4-6

I added cumin to this traditional recipe as it spices it up and brings out the flavours of the lentils. It's a simple one pot dish, and can be eaten warm or cold.

2 cups green lentils
4 carrots
1 cup cherry tomatoes, cut in halves
1 large onion, finely chopped
4 cups water
1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
1 tsp cumin
1/3 cup parsley, finely chopped
Salt and pepper to taste

1 In a large pot, heat a little olive oil and sauté the onions until they are slightly browned. Add the carrots and cook for another minute or so.

2 Add the lentils, hot water, Worcestershire sauce, cumin and half the parsley. Bring to a boil and simmer covered for about 30 minutes.

3 Remove the lid, stir the lentils around, add salt and pepper to taste and simmer uncovered for another 15 minutes or until done.

4 Let the lentils cool to room temperature, then add the tomatoes and remaining parsley and finish with a drizzle of olive oil before serving.

TIP The salad can be made ahead and keeps well for up to two days. Add a drizzle of olive oil and fluff it with a fork before serving.

Cooking in D's kitchen

Cupcake queen and food blogger, Dalia Dogmoch, gives traditional Levantine cuisine a contemporary twist. Photographs CRIS MEJORADA

Lamb Loins with Roasted Potatoes & Sweet Balsamic

SERVES 4 – 6

The sweet balsamic helps tone down the lamb, giving this otherwise Arabic dish a unique flavour.

1.2kg lamb loins
1 tsp dried thyme
1 tsp dried rosemary
¼ cup olive oil
6 potatoes, cut into small squares
4 garlic cloves, minced
1/3 cup fresh coriander, finely chopped
2 tbsp olive oil
1 cup balsamic vinegar
1 tbsp brown sugar
1 tbsp honey
Salt and pepper to taste

1 In a small bowl, mix the olive oil and herbs, then rub it over the lamb. Cover and let the lamb marinate for at least an hour in the fridge.

2 In a large pan, heat some olive oil and sauté the potatoes for a few minutes, then cover with a lid and cook for about 15 minutes, tossing every few minutes. Season with salt and pepper, then cook for another 10 minutes, uncovered, and set aside.

3 In another small saucepan, heat a generous amount of olive oil and cook the garlic and coriander for just a minute. Add to the ready potatoes and keep warm until serving.

4 In a small saucer, bring the balsamic vinegar to a rapid boil, add the sugar, honey and salt, then simmer for about 30 minutes (reducing it by two-thirds), stirring frequently to avoid it from burning. Set aside.

5 Generously season the marinated lamb and heat a pan or griddle on medium heat. Place the lamb in the pan for 2-3 minutes on each side (depending on the thickness), then remove from the heat and let it rest for 5 minutes before cutting into slices. Serve with the coriander potatoes and a drizzle of the Balsamic reduction over the lamb.

TIP Do not overcook the garlic in the oven, as this will lead to an unpleasant, bitter flavour.



CHEF'S BITES

LEVANT CUISINE



Pistachio and cinnamon custard

SERVES 4-6

Pistachios are a classic flavour in Levantine food, and I have incorporated that in custard form to make it suitable for modern cooks.

2 cups whole milk

1 can condensed milk

4 eggs

4 tbsp sugar

¼ cup peeled pistachios

½ tsp cinnamon

1 Preheat oven to 125C. In a bowl, whisk the eggs and half the sugar until creamy. In another bowl, combine the milk with the condensed milk and add it to the egg mixture. Whisk until everything is well combined.

2 In a small pan, heat a small knob of butter and sauté the pistachios with the remaining sugar and cinnamon. Set aside to cool.

3 Place ramekins in a baking tray, and pour the custard into the ramekins. Then add boiling water to the baking tray, reaching about half way up the ramekins and bake for 1 hour, until firm.

4 Remove from the oven and let it completely cool before placing it in the fridge for at least 2 hours. Finish with a generous sprinkle of toasted pistachios.

TIP You'll know when the custard is ready if it is firm to the touch, similar to a crème brûlée.

Dalia Dogmoch is the co-founder of Kitsch cupcakes and creator of food blog D's Kitchen.

Visit www.daliaskitchen.com for more foodie inspiration.

Baking bread



Gluten-free doesn't have to mean bread-free. Areej Jomaa, the gourmand behind Sweet Connections gluten-free bakeshop, shows us how to make delicious bread at home. Photographs CRIS MEJORADA

🍯 *This bread can be made with different flavours – replace the apricots and thyme with olives, feta cheese and rosemary; or parmesan, oregano and sundried tomatoes for tasty variations. 🍯*

Gluten free brown bread with dried apricots and fresh thyme

(Makes 1 loaf, approx. 12 slices)

450g Gluten-free brown bread flour
1/2 tsp salt
2 tsp quick yeast
2 tbsp sugar
350ml warm milk
1 tsp vinegar
2 eggs
6 tbsp oil
1/2 cup dried apricots
few sprigs of fresh thyme

1 Mix together the flour, yeast, salt and sugar.

2 In a large bowl beat in the milk, vinegar and eggs. Add the flour and mix to form a sticky dough. Continue mixing adding the oil.

3 Place the dough in an oiled 1kg bread tin. Sprinkle some gluten-free flour over top of loaf and make some cuts at the top of the loaf with a knife. Cover and leave to rise in a warm place for 1 hour.

4 Bake in a pre-heated oven for 40 to 45 minutes.

Cooking with a manicure

Farah Sawaf, founder of cookery website *Cooking with a Manicure*, and PR guru, shares a Mediterranean-inspired menu, which can be cooked up in 30 minutes flat. Photographs CRIS MEJORADA



Lamb pitas

SERVES 4 • PREP 15 min.

Lamb has a deep rich flavour that is perfectly complemented by the aroma of the rosemary. I recommend this for children, as they usually love it, and it's also good for them.

Recommended NStyle nail polish colour for this recipe: Be Mine

- 2 tsp olive oil
- 1 tbsp fresh rosemary, chopped
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 pound boneless leg of lamb, cut into small cubes
- 1 1/2 cups seeded cucumber, finely chopped
- 1 tbsp fresh lemon juice
- 1 cup container plain low-fat yoghurt
- 4 pieces of whole-wheat Arabic bread

- 1** Heat oil in a large non-stick skillet over medium-high heat. Combine rosemary, garlic, salt and pepper and lamb, tossing to coat. Add lamb mixture to pan, sauté for a few minutes (be careful not to overcook).
- 2** In a bowl, combine cucumber, lemon juice and yoghurt to make sauce. Season with salt and ground black pepper.
- 3** To serve, divide the lamb mixture evenly among each of the 4 pitas, and drizzle with sauce.

Couscous salad with feta and bell pepper

SERVES 4-6 • PREP 30 min.

I love the small pieces of cheese in this dish that give a rich kick in each mouthful.

Recommended NStyle nail polish colour for this recipe: Poetic Petra

- 2 cups couscous
- 2 cups boiling water
- 3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tsp butter
- 1 cup yellow squash, cubed
- 2 cups small zucchini cubes
- 2 cloves garlic, peeled and finely chopped
- 1 large roasted red pepper, peeled, seeded and cut into small pieces
- 1 small red onion, chopped

- 1 large cucumber, seeded and finely cubed
- 1 cup pitted Kalamata olives
- 250g crumbled feta cheese,
- 3 tbsp parsley, finely chopped
- 3 tbsp fresh mint, finely chopped
- 1 tbsp basil, chopped
- ½ cup good quality virgin olive oil
- ½ cup chicken stock (vegetable stock can be used too)
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 1 tsp crushed thyme
- Salt and pepper

- 1 Put the couscous in a large heat proof bowl, slowly pouring boiling water over it, stir with a fork and cover the bowl with cling wrap. Set aside.
- 2 Heat the extra virgin olive oil in a

sauté pan over medium-high heat.

Sauté the zucchini and yellow squash until tender. Add the garlic and sauté for another 30 seconds. Remove the vegetables from the pan to a baking sheet and spread out to cool quickly.

3 Uncover the couscous and transfer into a large bowl. Using a fork, break the couscous grains up. Add the zucchini, squash, roasted red pepper, red onion, cucumber, olives, feta, parsley, mint and basil.

4 Pour the extra virgin olive oil into a bowl adding the stock, lemon juice and thyme to the mix. Season to taste

5 Serve the couscous salad in a large bowl, with dressing on the side.





Lemony Shrimp Pasta

SERVES 4-6 • PREP 15 MIN. 🍷

This dish is so simple that it can be whipped up almost any time for any occasion.

Recommended NStyle nail polish colour for this recipe: Gold Souk

Wholegrain fettuccini or spaghetti

1 tbsp butter

1/3 red onion, chopped

3 cloves garlic, minced

½ kg shrimp, peeled, cleaned and deveined

2 lemons, juiced

½ cup wine or chicken stock

3 tbsp drained capers

2 cups baby spinach

1/4 cup fresh basil, chopped

Toasted pine nuts, for garnish

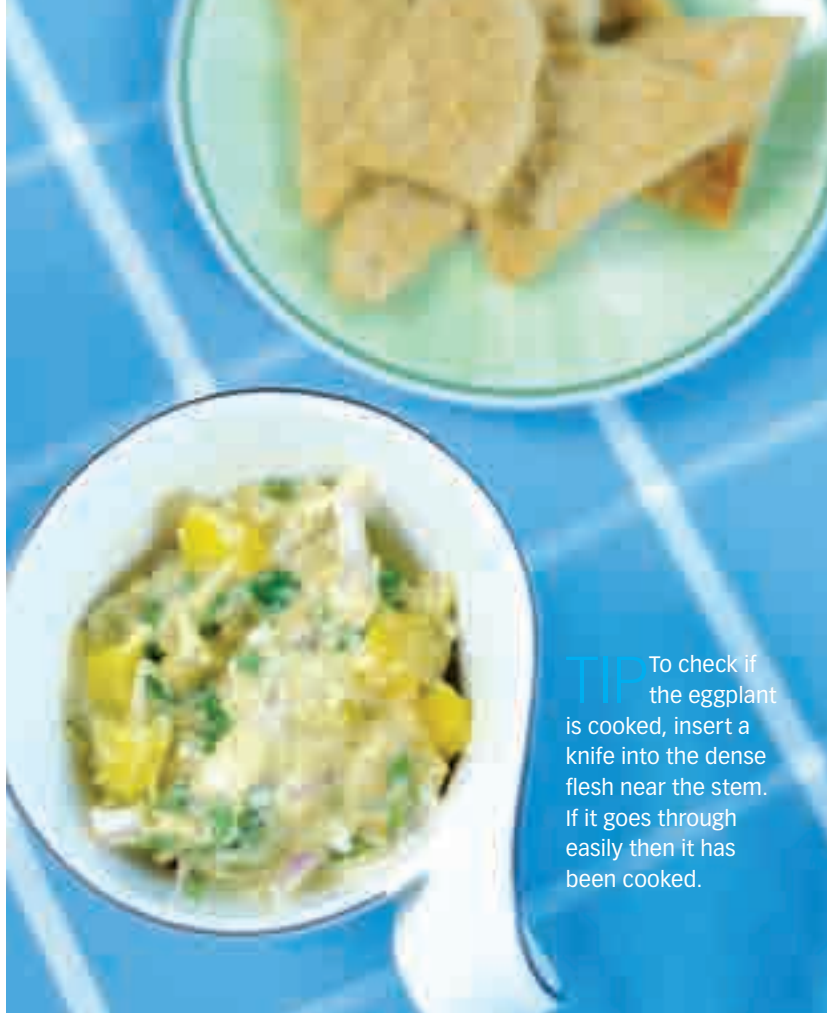
½ tsp lemon zest

1 Bring water to a boil, add pasta and cook according to package instructions. Drain and return to pot.

2 Stir in butter, red onion, garlic, shrimp and lemon juice. Cook over medium heat until shrimps turn pink and are no longer raw.

3 Mix in wine or chicken stock with the capers. Add spinach and cook for 1 minute, it should be cooked but not soggy. Add basil and mix thoroughly.

4 Transfer to a serving dish and garnish with toasted pine nuts and lemon zest for colour.



TIP To check if the eggplant is cooked, insert a knife into the dense flesh near the stem. If it goes through easily then it has been cooked.

Eggplant dip with baked pita chips

SERVES 4-6 • PREP 20 MIN.

This is a healthy and delicious snack, with the creamy eggplant giving the dip a smoky flavour.

Recommended NStyle nail polish color for this recipe: Obsession

500g eggplant (1 large or 2 medium)

2 tbsp lemon juice

1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil

1/2 cup crumbled feta cheese

1 tbsp sour cream

1/2 cup red onion, finely chopped

1 small yellow bell pepper/ capsicum, finely chopped

2 tbsp fresh basil, chopped

1 tbsp flat-leaf parsley, finely chopped

1/4 tsp cayenne pepper, or to taste

1/4 tsp sugar

1/4 tsp salt

4-6 pc. Arabic bread

1 Set oven rack about 15 cm above heat source; pre-heat to highest temperature available.

2 Place the whole eggplant in a pan with foil and poke a few holes all over it to vent steam. Broil the eggplant, turning every 5 minutes, until the skin is charred (this takes about 15 to 20 minutes). Transfer to a cutting board when it has cooled down.

3 Cut Arabic bread into triangles and place in the oven for about 5 minutes.

4 Pour lemon juice into a medium bowl. Cut the eggplant in half lengthwise, and scrape the flesh into the bowl. Toss well with the lemon juice. Add oil and stir with a fork until the oil is absorbed (it should be a little chunky.) Stir in feta, sour cream onion, bell pepper, basil, parsley, cayenne pepper, sugar and salt.

5 Serve dip in a bowl with the baked chips on the side.

Farah gets her fresh fruit and veg from Organic Foods and Café. They offer a 20 percent discount on all products, every third Saturday of the month!

For more recipes from Farah Sawaf, visit cookingwithamanicure.com

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Chef Alessandra Salvatico

There are few things as quintessentially Italian as an espresso. Much more than a cup of coffee however, espresso can be creatively used as an ingredient in avant-garde Italian cuisine. We asked the chefs from three top Italian restaurants to share a recipe each, using espresso as the main ingredient. Photographs CRIS MEJORADA

Luigi Bezerra invented the espresso in 1903 when he accidentally added pressure to his coffee brewing process which resulted in a reduction in brewing time. He later created a machine known as the 'Fast coffee machine' from which the word espresso was coined, as espresso translates to 'fast' in Italian. An espresso is made using a selected coffee

bean, and roasted and brewed using special processes.

An espresso has a thicker consistency compared to other coffee beverages and has a higher concentration of caffeine, and is usually topped with crema (foam).

In Italian culture, drinking an espresso at the end of a meal is *de rigueur*. The Italian way of drinking it is by first

breathing in the aroma, pushing the crema aside with a spoon and then sipping the entire espresso in three to four gulps.

An espresso is known for its intensity and aroma, and when used in certain dishes, it adds a distinctive taste. It pairs well with some meats and seafood, intensifying their flavours, and can also be used in desserts, giving an extra kick.

Daniele Capobianco from Certo at Radisson Blu, Dubai Media City grew up surrounded by local produce such as fresh olive oil and truffles in Sardinia, which helped instil a passion for traditional cooking in him.

He says: *“I opted for seafood as espresso makes a great accompaniment to balance the flavours.”*

Espresso flavoured Seabass with ratatouille, orange zest and forest fruit sauce

SERVES 2

2 fillet of 180g seabass
1 pc. pepper
1 pc. carrot
½ pc. leeks
100g asparagus
1 pc. green zucchini
100g fennel
20cl extra virgin olive oil
1 pc. orange
50g blackberries
50g raspberry
4 single espressos
Salt to season
Pepper to season
10g thyme
10g rosemary

- 1** Cut the seabass fillet in half and marinate with the espresso, thyme, salt and pepper.
- 2** Cut all the vegetables in julienne and sauté with the oil, rosemary, salt and pepper.
- 3** Blanch the asparagus and keep them al dente. In a saucepan, sauté the fennel with oil, salt and pepper. In another pan, sear the sea bass with oil, salt and pepper
- 4** Using the same pan, add the juice of the marinated seabass with the blackberries, raspberries and a few pieces of orange zest, to make the sauce.
- 5** Place the vegetables on a plate, and gently place the fish on top. Add the fennel in between the two halves of the fillet.
- 6** Warm up the blanched asparagus and place on the side, use some of the orange zest on the top of the sea bass and finish with the sauce.



CHEF'S BITES

MEDITERRANEAN



Chef Alessandra Salvatico from Armani/Ristorante comes from Northern Italy, and has built up a reputation over 10 years of working as a chef, as someone who likes to combine home-style Italian flavours with modern presentations.

He says: *“Carrots and espresso are an excellent combination. I like to keep the meat simple with natural flavours, and this espresso sauce adds a punch.”*

Roasted veal tenderloin, carrot and anis puree with sugar snaps and espresso sauce

SERVES 2

2 pcs. 160 g Veal tenderloin
250g carrots
125g sugar snaps
15g arabica coffee beans
1/2 cup of Italian espresso
25g amaretto biscuits, crushed
1.5g star anise powder

- 1 Boil the carrots until soft and puree in a food processor with star anise powder, salt and pepper.
- 2 Blanch sugar snaps in salty water and cool in ice water to preserve the colour.
- 3 In a pan, sear veal tenderloins with olive oil until golden. Place on a tray and bake in the oven for 8 minutes.
- 4 In the same pan, add veal jus, coffee beans and one cup of Italian espresso. Reduce until it forms an even consistency. Meanwhile, remove meat from the oven (should be pink inside).
- 5 On a plate, place carrot puree and add the meat on top. Gently add sugar snaps glazed with butter, a sprinkle of amaretto powder and coffee sauce.

Alessandro Bottazi opened the renowned Ronda Locatelli restaurant at Atlantis the Palm Dubai in 2008. He began his culinary journey working in various parts of Italy before moving to Paris and London to gain hands-on experience with none other than Giorgio Locatelli himself, as sous chef at Locanda Locatelli restaurant.

He says: *“People usually opt for an espresso or coffee to finish off their meal, but this dish is great as it combines dessert as well. A traditional and simple dessert that can be created at home.”*

Affagato - gelato di vanilla

SERVES 2

325ml whole milk
50g whipping cream
30g milk powder
90g dextrose
30g caster sugar
60g egg yolks
1.5g vanilla pods, halved
10g inverted sugar

- 1 Using a hand blender, blend the milk, cream, milk powder and dextrose until smooth
- 2 Place contents in a pan and bring to 40 degrees C (use a thermometer). Whisk in the sugars, egg yolks, vanilla seeds (scraped) and the pod.
- 3 Bring up to 85 degrees C and take off the heat to cool as quickly as possible.
- 4 Refrigerate for 6-12 hours. Remove the vanilla pod.
- 5 To serve, place vanilla scoop in bowl with a cup of hot espresso on the side. Pour espresso over the vanilla ice cream and indulge.





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Food for the Weekend

Inspirational ideas for relaxed family meals and entertaining in style



76 Make your own jams to up your domestic-goddess cred!



80 Gourmet vegetarian recipes that are show-off worthy



84 Easy, delicious roasts



New potato and frisee salad, recipe p68

House party!

Want to be the host with the most? Some of Dubai's top culinary experts share hints and tips on home entertaining.

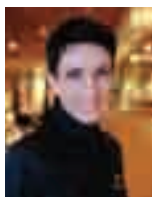


The formula for being the perfect party host is simple – great food, enhanced by a few pretty accessories, and you're sorted as far as impressing your guests is concerned. And at Crate & Barrel's recent first anniversary celebrations, there was plenty of inspiration for both. While lusting after the latest collections of their gorgeous, on-trend homewares, we also picked up some useful tips on being the perfect party host, from the experts doing cookery demonstrations and interior design consultations in-store. Here, we share some snippets from the party:



Who: Sibille
Buchholzer-Juen,
Iconycs cakes
(www.iconycs.com)

"Make the most of seasonal produce – for example, use strawberries, carrots, blueberries, raspberries and lemons around this time of the year. These ingredients are light, fresh and taste delicious when used in cakes and desserts."



Quick bites

One ingredient you never bake

without: "Butter. Never replace butter with vegetable shortening! Butter melts in your mouth while you devour your cake whereas vegetable shortening simply coats your mouth."

Top cake-making tip: To slice the excess fondant off, I use a pizza slicer instead of a knife, as the fondant tends to stick and move along with the knife while slicing it off.

Your essential baking item: A cake board and turntable. These are definitely worth investing in, as they make decorating cakes simple – you can simply rotate it rather than moving around yourself.

Who: Sharon
Conneely-Donaldson,
Interior design
consultant

"The host and hostess set the tone for the evening. If you enjoy yourselves, then everyone else will! Get people chatting by making introductions and including everyone in conversations."



Quick bites

Top party decor tip: Pick a colour palette that suits the occasion. White and silver is always elegant and formal, while colours like fuschia and purple are great for something like a girly themed event.

Your favourite dining accessory: Placemats made out of natural materials such as cotton, cork, palm fiber or raffia.

This season's hot interior trends: The spring/summer 2012 fashion trends have been all about vibrant, fresh yellows, oranges and greens, and these are on-trend for homes too. Bold black and white is also a classic for home interiors you can't go wrong with!

Who: Mauro
Cereda, Executive
sous Chef of Media
Rotana Dubai (www.
rotana.com)

"I would suggest canapés/ tapas style platters when entertaining at home as it's always better to do small tastings of a variety of appetisers."



Quick bites

Favourite ingredient: Tomatoes. I love using them, especially in summer, as that is when they are the ripest and full of flavour.

What you can't cook without: Fresh herbs! I cannot stress enough on how delicious and beautiful they are as garnish or simply added to a dish. I recommend opting for fresh herbs instead of dried.

Kitchen essential: A good knife – always make sure your knife is sharp and gives you a precise cut. And a wooden spoon – I believe it brings out the flavour in a dish.



Chef Mauro shares one of his canape recipes:



Fried soft shell crab with beetroot marmalade

SERVES 6 • PREP 20 minutes

6pc. soft shell crab
100g semolina flour
100g white pepper powder
2g white eggs
3g salt
200g fresh beetroot, chopped
1 plum tomato
20g radicchio
20g fennel
20g rucola lettuce
500 ml vegetable oil
1 pc. lemon
60 g sugar
½ glass water
4 tbs extra virgin olive oil

1 Clean the crab, dry with a paper tablecloth and set aside. In a medium bowl, whisk the egg white.
2 Add salt to the crab and dip in semolina flour to coat.
3 In a deep pan, add the chopped beetroot, water and sugar and cook until it forms marmalade. Once formed, place in a mixer until it has achieved a smooth, jam-like consistency.
4 In a deep pan, add oil and fry crab for 3-5 minutes.
5 Chop lettuce and add the juice of half of the lemon, extra virgin olive oil, salt and pepper.
6 To serve, place the marmalade on a plate. Add the lettuce on the side and place fried crab on top with a slice of lemon to garnish.

Spring buffet



BBC chef James Martin shares an easy weekend entertaining menu of flavour-filled, sharing dishes that can be prepared ahead. Photographs DAVID MUNNS

New potato & frisée salad

SERVES 8-10 • PREP 15 mins •

COOK 30 mins **Easy**   

Homemade salad cream is so much more delicious than shop-bought. It'll keep for up to a week in the fridge.

1.5kg baby new potatoes, larger ones halved

1 frisée lettuce

bunch chives, snipped

FOR THE SALAD CREAM

1 tbsp plain flour

4 tsp caster sugar

2 tsp mustard powder

2 eggs

100ml/3½fl oz white wine vinegar

150ml/¼pt double cream

squeeze lemon juice

- 1** Boil the potatoes in salted water until tender, about 15 mins. Drain well in a colander and steam dry for 5-10 mins.
- 2** Make the salad cream by mixing the flour, sugar, mustard powder and some seasoning in a bowl, then beat in the eggs and white wine vinegar. Place the bowl over a pan of simmering water, making sure the base does not touch the water, and stir continuously until it thickens enough to coat the back of a spoon, about 5-10 mins.
- 3** Remove from the heat and cool. Add the cream and lemon juice to taste. Cover and chill until you are ready to dress the potatoes.
- 4** Pick over the frisée, discarding any damaged leaves, then tear into bite-sized pieces. Toss the potatoes in the salad cream along with most of the chives. Arrange the frisée on a platter or in a large bowl. Spoon over the potatoes and scatter with the rest of the chives.

PER SERVING 266 kcals, protein 6g, carbs 34g, fat 13g, sat fat 6g, fibre 2g, sugar 5g, salt 0.13g

GET AHEAD

- The salad cream can be made up to two days in advance and chilled, then the potatoes can be cooked a day ahead, ready to be put together just before serving.
- For nice, neat slices, roast the beef the day before, cool, then chill before slicing. This makes it easier to carve.
- The salsa verde can be made the day before too, so you just need to bring everything back to room temperature before serving.

Roasted sirloin of beef with salsa verde

SERVES 8-10 ● PREP 15 mins ●

COOK 50 mins **Easy** 

1.5kg sirloin of beef

1 tbsp olive oil

rocket and crusty bread, to serve

FOR THE SALSA VERDE

2 tbsp capers, rinsed, drained and chopped

2 tbsp gherkins, finely chopped

½ bunch spring onions, finely chopped

small bunch parsley, finely chopped

juice 2 lemons

4 tbsp extra virgin olive oil

1 Heat oven to 240C/220C fan.

Rub the beef all over with the oil and season with some salt and lots of black pepper. Transfer to a roasting tray and cook for 20 mins, then turn the oven to 190C/170C fan/gas 5 and roast for a further 10-15 mins per 450g for medium-rare, 15-20 mins per 450g for medium, 20-25 mins for medium-well and 25-30 mins for well done. Remove from the oven and allow to cool.

2 To make the salsa verde, mix all the ingredients with some salt and pepper. Thinly slice the beef and arrange on a serving platter, drizzle with the salsa verde and rocket leaves and eat with the crusty bread.

PER SERVING 353 kcals, protein 38g, carbs 1g, fat 22g, sat fat 8g, fibre none, sugar none, salt 0.41g



This fresh sauce goes really well with cold meat or fish

Salmon & watercress quiche

SERVES 8-10 ● PREP 30 mins plus chilling

● COOK 1 hr 15 mins **Easy** 

350g plain flour, plus extra for dusting

1 tsp salt

140g cold butter, cut into cubes

3-5 tbsp very cold water

FOR THE FILLING

50g/2oz watercress, roughly chopped

200g/7oz smoked salmon, shredded

1 tbsp chopped dill

5 eggs, beaten

100ml/3½fl oz milk

250ml/9fl oz double cream

1 First, make the pastry. Sift the flour and salt together into a food processor or a large bowl if you want to make it by hand. Pulse or rub in the butter until it resembles breadcrumbs. Add enough water to make the dough come together, then wrap well and chill in the fridge for 10-15 mins.

2 Roll out the pastry on a lightly floured surface until around 2mm thick, then line a 26cm tart tin – don't trim off the excess pastry just yet though, as it will shrink a little when it cooks.

3 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Remove the pastry case from the fridge and line with baking parchment. Fill with baking beans, then bake blind for 20 mins. Remove beans and paper then cook for 5 mins more until pale golden. Turn down the oven to 160C/140C fan. Trim the edges of the pastry case with a sharp serrated knife.

4 Arrange the watercress and salmon in the bottom of the pastry case. Whisk the dill, eggs, milk and cream and season well. Pour over the salmon and watercress then bake for 30-40 mins, or until set with a slight wobble in the centre. Serve warm, or at room temperature.

PER SERVING 538 kcals, protein 17g, carbs 36g, fat 37g, sat fat 20g, fibre 2g, sugar 2g, salt 2.21g

GET AHEAD

You can make the quiche up to 8 hours before serving. Leave at room temperature rather than chilling, as this prevents the pastry from going soggy.



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15 things to do with prawns

Simple recipes with a packet of prawns. Recipes JANINE RATCLIFFE

BUYING GUIDE

If you're cooking with small, cold-water prawns, look for those that have been sustainably fished around Iceland, Greenland and Canada. Cold-water prawns are usually sold cooked and peeled and are great for sandwiches and salads.

Warm-water prawns (king and tiger) usually come from fish farms in Asia, some of which have a negative impact on the environment and there are questions over stocking density and the use of antibiotics.

Cold-water prawns are the more sustainable choice, but if you must use warm-water prawns (such as tiger prawns), opt for organic prawns, and if possible, prawns from Madagascar.

1. QUICK SUPPER

Prawn and pea risotto

SERVES 2 • 30 minutes • **Easy** 🍴

Heat 2 tbsp **olive oil** in a pan. Cook 1 finely chopped onion and 1 crushed clove of **garlic** until softened, then add 150g **risotto rice** and stir to coat. Tip in a glass of **white wine** and bubble until reduced. Add 750ml **chicken stock** bit by bit, stirring until the rice is tender (you might not need all the stock). Add a handful of **frozen peas** and 150g cooked, peeled **prawns** for the last 3 minutes of cooking.

PER SERVING 517 kcals, protein 25.4g, carbs 69.7g, fat 14.4g, sat fat 1.9g, fibre 3.2g, salt 4.22g

2. GAME NIGHT SNACK

Thai prawn cakes

MAKES 16 • 20 minutes • **Easy** 🍴

Put 400g raw, peeled **king prawns** in a food processor with 1 tbsp **Thai red curry paste**, 1 tbsp **fish sauce**, a handful of **coriander** and a large pinch of **salt**. Add 1 **egg white** and whizz to a paste. Form into small cakes (there's enough for about 16). Heat 2 tbsp **groundnut oil** in a large frying pan, then cook the cakes for 2 minutes each side until golden and crisp. Serve with **sweet chilli dipping sauce**.

PER PRAWN CAKE 34 kcals, protein 4.8g, carbs 0.2g, fat 1.6g, sat fat 0.3g, fibre 0g, salt 0.5g

3. PUB CLASSIC

Pint of prawns with lemon and dill mayo

SERVES 2 • 10 minutes • **Easy** 🍴

Mix 4 tbsp **mayonnaise** with a handful of chopped **dill** and the zest and juice of a **lemon**. Season. Divide 400g small cooked, shell-on **prawns** between two glasses – serve with the mayo, **brown bread** and **butter** and finger bowls.

PER SERVING 284 kcals, protein 17.8g, carbs 0.9g, fat 23.3g, sat fat 3.8g, fibre 0.1g, salt 3.39g

4. FAT-FREE SNACK

Summer rolls

MAKES 24 • 20 minutes • **Easy** 🍴

Soak 50g **vermicelli noodles** in boiling water until softened. Drain really well then snip into small pieces. Add a handful of **coriander** and **mint** and 100g small cooked, peeled prawns, roughly chopped. Mix 1 tbsp fish sauce, 1 tsp unrefined light brown sugar and 1/2 chopped red chilli and toss with the noodles and herbs. Soak 12 rice paper wrappers until soft. Divide the mixture between the wrappers. Tuck in the sides, roll up and cut in half to serve.

PER ROLL 12 kcals, protein 1.3g, carbs 1.5g, fat 0.1g, sat fat 0g, fibre 0g, salt 0.22g

5. THURSDAY TREAT

Prawn pakoras

MAKES 16 • 20 minutes • **Easy** 🍴

Mix 150g **gram (chickpea) flour** in a bowl with 1 tsp **ground cumin**, 1 tsp ground **coriander**, a pinch of **chilli flakes** and 1/2 tsp **salt**. Mix in cold **water** until you have a thick batter (about 100-120ml). Mix in 200g large raw, peeled **prawns** and 6 roughly chopped **spring onions** until completely coated. Fill a pan one-third full with **sunflower oil** and heat until a cube of bread browns in 30 seconds. Drop in the prawns and cook for a couple of minutes until puffed and golden. Serve with **raita**.

PER PAKORA 77 kcals, protein 4.2g, carbs 4.9g, fat 4.7g, sat fat 0.5g, fibre 1.1g, salt 0.23g

6. RETRO STARTER

Prawn cocktail

SERVES 4 • 10 minutes • **Easy** 🍴

Mix 4 tbsp **mayonnaise**, 1 1/2 tbsp tomato **ketchup**, a dash of **Tabasco** and **Worcestershire sauce** and a squeeze of **lemon juice**. Toss with 300g cooked, peeled **prawns**. Put torn **little gem** leaves in the bottom of four glasses then top with the prawn mix. Serve with **lemon wedges**.

PER SERVING 193 kcals, protein 17.7g, carbs 3.2g, fat 12.2g, sat fat 2g, fibre 0.3g, salt 1.8g

7. TAPAS LUNCH

Baked prawns with sherry and garlic

SERVES 2 • 15 minutes • **Easy** 🍴

Heat the oven to 220C/fan 200C. Divide 300g raw, peeled **king prawns** between 2 ovenproof dishes. Top each with a pinch of **chilli flakes**, a thinly sliced clove of **garlic**, 1 tbsp olive oil and 1 tbsp dry **sherry**. Bake for 6-8 minutes until prawns are pink and sizzling. Scatter over **parsley** and serve with **crusty bread**.

PER SERVING 237 kcals, protein 26.9g, carbs 1.1g, fat 12.1g, sat fat 1.8g, fibre 0.3g, salt 0.77g

8. TEN-MINUTE SALAD**Mango prawn salad**SERVES 2 ● 10 minutes ● **Easy**

Peel a small **mango** and cut into strips. Toss with 1/2 finely sliced small **red onion**, 150g cooked, peeled prawns, 3 tbsp **grapefruit juice** and 1 tbsp **olive oil**. Toss with 50g **rocket** and serve.

PER SERVING 207 kcals, protein 18.8g, carbs 19.5g, fat 6.5g, sat fat 0.9g, fibre 3.6g, salt 1.35g

9. LUNCH TO GO**Prawn and watercress wrap**SERVES 2 ● 10 minutes ● **Easy**

Mix 100g cooked peeled small **prawns** with 2 tbsp **mayonnaise**, 2 chopped **spring onions** and a squeeze of **lemon**. Spoon over 2 **flour tortillas** and top with a handful of **watercress**. Tuck in the sides, roll up and cut in half to serve.

PER SERVING 283 kcals, protein 16g, carbs 23.3g, fat 14.7g, sat fat 2.4g, fibre 1.3g, salt 2.35g

10. BARBECUE STANDBY**Prawn skewers**SERVES 2 ● 10 minutes ● **Easy**

Mix 1 chopped **red chilli**, 1 crushed clove of **garlic**, 1/2 tsp **cumin** and season. Toss with 12 large shell-on raw **prawns** and marinate for 5 minutes. Thread 3 prawns on each of 4 skewers. Grill for 2-3 minutes on each side until pink and cooked through. Serve with **chilli sauce** for dipping.

PER SERVING 94 kcals, protein 16.3g, carbs 5.8g, fat 0.8g, sat fat 0.1g, fibre 0.2g, salt 1.21g

11. SPICE HIT**Prawn laksa**SERVES 2 ● 10 minutes ● **Easy**

Soak 50g **flat rice noodles** in boiling water until softened. Divide between 2 bowls. Put a 400ml tin **half-fat coconut milk** in a pan with 500ml **chicken stock**, 3 tbsp **laksa paste**, then simmer for 3 minutes. Add 200g cooked, peeled **prawns** and a handful of **beansprouts** and simmer for 1 minute. Divide between the bowls and top with shredded **spring onions**, **coriander leaves** and **green chilli**.

PER SERVING 451 kcals, protein 28.1g, carbs 28.8g, fat 26.3g, sat fat 18.4g, fibre 1.4g, salt 4.63g

12. EASY CANAPÉ**Mini prawn poppadoms**MAKES 20 ● 10 minutes ● **Easy**

Mix 150g chopped cooked peeled **prawns** with 2 tbsp **greek yoghurt**, 2 tbsp **mango chutney** and a dash of **chilli sauce**. Dollop on top of mini **poppadoms** and finish with **coriander** sprigs.

PER POPPADOM 29 kcals, protein 2.5g, carbs 2.6g, fat 1.1g, sat fat 0.3g, fibre 0.1g, salt 0.27g

13. SMART ONE-POT**Prawn and chorizo paella**SERVES 4 ● 30 MINUTES ● **Easy**

Heat 2 tbsp **olive oil** in a large, wide pan. Cook 1 chopped **onion** and 2 cloves of crushed **garlic** until softened. Add 100g **chorizo**, chopped into chunks, and cook until it gives up some of its oil. Stir in 300g **paella rice** and a pinch of **saffron**. Pour in 800ml **chicken stock**, stir and simmer until rice is tender and stock absorbed. Add 200g cooked, peeled **prawns** and a handful of chopped **parsley** for the last 3 minutes of cooking.

PER SERVING 449 kcals, protein 22.6g, carbs 63.2g, fat 13.4g, sat fat 3.1g, fibre 2g, salt 2.79g

14. HEARTY SOUP**Prawn chowder**SERVES 2 ● 30 minutes ● **Easy**

Melt a knob of **butter** in a pan and cook 4 chopped **spring onions**, 200g **sweetcorn** and a large peeled and diced **potato** for a few minutes. Add 750ml **chicken** or **veg stock** and simmer until the potato is tender. Add 150g small cooked, peeled **prawns**, 4 tbsp **double cream** and cook for a couple of minutes until prawns are heated through. Stir in a handful of chopped **parsley** and serve.

PER SERVING 489 kcals, protein 23.7g, carbs 46.8g, fat 24.3g, sat fat 12g, fibre 3.3g, salt 4.99g

15. FAST PASTA**Linguine with prawn and basil butter**SERVES 2 ● 15 MINUTES ● **Easy**

Cook 150g **linguine** following the pack instructions. Melt 50g **butter** in a small pan and gently cook 1 crushed clove of **garlic**. Add 100g raw, peeled **prawns** and cook for a few minutes until pink. Season. Drain pasta and toss with prawn butter and a handful of shredded **basil**.

PER SERVING 482 kcals, protein 18.5g, carbs 55.6g, fat 22.2g, sat fat 13.3g, fibre 2g, salt 1.33g

Prawn laksa



Stay for supper!

Friends dropped in for a surprise visit? With just a few storecupboard items, or a standby dish from the freezer, you can rustle up a tasty meal – fast!

Pesto pizza

SERVES 4-8 ● PREP 15 mins ●

COOK 12 mins **Easy**  

Heat oven to 220C/200C fan.


Make a **500g pack bread mix** following pack instructions. Don't bother rising, just roll out dough as thinly as possible on a large baking tray dusted with flour.

Mix **4 tbsp pesto** with a **splash olive oil** and spread over. Top with **150g crumbled cheese** of your choice, plus any other toppings you can find in the fridge or cupboards. Bake for 12 mins until the dough is puffed up and the cheese has melted.

PER SERVING (8) 289 kcals, protein 13g, carbs 36g, fat 12g, sat fat 5g, fibre 3g, sugar 2g, salt 1.86g

Thai sausage rolls

MAKES 24 ● PREP 20 mins ●

COOK 15 mins **Easy** 

Skin **8 sausages** and mix with **1 chopped garlic clove**, **1 tbsp grated ginger**, **small handful chopped coriander** and **2 tbsp Thai curry paste**.


Roll out a **500g pack puff pastry** and halve lengthways. Spread half the sausage mixture along the middle of each pastry strip, then roll up the pastry from the long edges, pinching the ends together to seal. Use a sharp knife to cut each into 12 pieces. Place on baking trays, cover with cling film and freeze for up to 3 months.

To bake from frozen, heat oven to 200C/180C fan. Glaze sausage rolls with a **beaten egg** and bake for 15-20 mins until golden.

PER ROLL 131 kcals, protein 4g, carbs 8g, fat 10g, sat fat 4g, fibre 1g, sugar 1g, salt 0.63g

Sizzling seafood with chilli, lime & garlic

SERVES 4-8 ● PREP 10 mins ●


COOK 10 mins **Easy** 

Fry **2 chopped and deseeded red chillies** and **3 finely chopped garlic cloves** in **2 tbsp olive oil** for 1 min. Add a **200g bag frozen mixed seafood** and cook for 5 mins until thawed and sizzling. Squeeze over **juice ½ lime or lemon**, season well and scatter with a **small handful chopped coriander**. Stir through **cooked spaghetti**, or pile on **toasted bread slices**.

PER SERVING (8) 45 kcals, protein 4g, carbs none, fat 3g, sat fat none, fibre none, sugar none, salt 0.19g

Baked Camembert

SERVES 4-6 ● PREP 5 mins ●

COOK 20 mins **Easy** 

Heat oven to 200C/180C fan. Unwrap a **250g Camembert** (or Brie or other similar cheese) from its packaging, then place back into its box.


Tie string around the box to secure. Slash the cheese a few times and top with **1 tbsp vermouth** (or dry white wine), **2 thyme sprigs** and a **pinch of dried chilli flakes**.

Bake on a baking tray for 20 mins until gooey. Serve with **toasted bread or crackers** for dipping.

PER SERVING 125 kcals, protein 9g, carbs none, fat 10g, sat fat 6g, fibre none, sugar none, salt 0.64g (SHOWN HERE)

Easy frittata

SERVES 6-8 ● PREP 20 mins ●

COOK 20 mins **Easy** 

Dice and boil **2 large potatoes** until tender.

Finely slice **2 red onions** and fry in **2 tbsp vegetable oil** in a large frying pan until soft. Add a **handful diced vegetables** (like courgettes, peas, peppers, spinach, sweetcorn), a **handful diced meat** (bacon, chorizo, ham, shredded chicken) and the potatoes, and cook everything for 2 mins. Beat **8 eggs** with seasoning, mix into the pan, lower heat and sprinkle over **100g grated cheese**. Cook until the top has almost set, then pop under the grill for 2-3 mins until firm and golden. Serve hot or cold.

PER SERVING (8) 242 kcals, protein 15g, carbs 11g, fat 16g, sat fat 6g, fibre 1g, sugar 2g, salt 0.68g



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WEEKEND

Jams & preserves

Try these innovative ways to make use of fresh produce.

Piccalilli with pear,
recipe on p78





Sweet chilli jam

MAKES 4 small jars ● PREP 20 mins ●
COOK 1 hr **Easy**

8 red peppers, deseeded and roughly chopped
10 red chillies, roughly chopped
(don't discard the seeds)
finger-sized piece ginger, roughly chopped
8 garlic cloves, peeled but left whole
400g can cherry tomatoes
750g golden caster sugar
250ml red wine vinegar

1 Tip the peppers, chillies and their seeds, ginger and garlic into a food processor, then whizz until very finely chopped. Scrape into a wide, shallow pan with the tomatoes, sugar and vinegar, then bring everything to the boil. Skim off any scum, then turn the heat down to a simmer and cook for about 50 mins, stirring occasionally.

2 Once the jam is becoming sticky, continue cooking for 10-15 mins more, stirring frequently so that it doesn't catch and burn. It should now look like thick, bubbling lava. Cool slightly, transfer to sterilised jars, then leave to cool fully.

Keep for 3 months in a cool, dark place. Keep in the fridge once opened.

PER SERVING 857 kcals, protein 5g, carbs 220g, fat 1g, sat fat none, fibre none, sugar 218g, salt 0.34g



Summer fruits jam

MAKES 4 small jars ● PREP 20 mins ● COOK 15 mins **Easy**

500g summer fruits, such as berries, peaches and apricots
500g jam sugar

1 Briefly blend the fruit and place in a large microwave-proof bowl with the sugar.
2 Microwave on High for 3 mins, then stir well. Microwave for a further 3 mins on High, stirring after.

3 Finish with a further 2 mins, then pour into warm sterilised jars. Once bottled and cool the jam is ready.

Keeps for up to 6 months.

PER SERVING 70 kcals, protein none, carbs 19g, fat none, sat fat none, fibre none, sugar 19g, salt none



Grape jelly

MAKES 2 x 450ml jars ● PREP 10 mins ● COOK 20 mins plus straining **Easy**

1kg red grapes (ideally not seedless), stripped from stalks
450g jam sugar (with added pectin)
juice 1 lemon

1 Tip the grapes into a large pan set over a low heat, then cover and leave to gently cook for 5 mins until the juices start to run. Take a potato masher or fork and mash the grapes. Leave to cook for 10 mins more, mashing now and again until falling apart. Place a clean tea towel or kitchen cloth in a sieve over a bowl, then pour the mix in. Let it drip through for 1 hr, but ideally overnight.

2 Measure out the grape juice (you should have about 600ml) and pour it into a pan along with the sugar and lemon juice. Set the pan over a high heat and bring to the boil. Skim off any scum, and let the mix bubble until it reaches 105C on a sugar thermometer, then pour into a sterilised jar.

PER SERVING 57 kcals, protein none, carbs 15g, fat none, sat fat none, fibre none, sugar 15g, salt none



Piccalilli with pear

MAKES 5 x 500ml jars • PREP 20 mins
plus overnight salting • COOK 15 mins

Easy

- 2 small cauliflowers, cut into small florets
- 400g silverskin or pearl onions
- 600g 5oz courgettes, cut in 2cm chunks
- 6 firm pears, cored, cut in 2cm chunks
- 100g salt
- 1.7 litres/3 pints cider vinegar
- finger-length piece ginger, grated
- 2 tbsp coriander seeds
- 3 tbsp brown or black mustard seeds
- 300g golden caster sugar
- 8 tbsp cornflour
- 5 tbsp English mustard powder
- 3 tsp turmeric

1 In a bowl, mix together the vegetables, pears and salt with 2 litres of cold water, then cover and leave overnight.

2 The next day, drain the brine from the vegetables, rinse briefly, then tip into a large saucepan with the vinegar, ginger, coriander seeds, mustard seeds and sugar. Bring to the boil and simmer for 8-10 mins until the veg are just tender but still with a little bite. Drain the vegetables, reserving the liquid, and set aside while you make the sweet mustard sauce.

3 In a large bowl, mix the cornflour, mustard powder and turmeric, then slowly pour in the hot liquid while whisking, until you have a lump-free, thin yellow sauce. Return it to the saucepan and bubble over a low heat, stirring non-stop, for 4 mins until smooth and thickened. Stir in the veg and spoon into five sterilised 500ml jars while hot, then seal. Once cool it's ready to eat.

PER SERVING 31 kcals, protein 1g, carbs 6g, fat 1g, sat fat none, fibre 1g, sugar 5g, salt 1.01g

Marrow & ginger jam

MAKES 4 x 450ml jars • PREP 30 mins •
COOK 30 mins plus overnight standing

Easy

- 4 unwaxed lemons
- 1.8kg marrows, peeled and cut into sugar-cube-sized pieces
- 1.8kg jam sugar (with added pectin)
- 85g ginger, shredded

1 Pare the zest from the lemons with a peeler, and then juice them, keeping the juice, shells and pips. Tie the shells and pips into a muslin bag. Put the marrow into a preserving pan with 2 tbsp of the lemon juice, then cook on a medium heat, stirring often, until the pieces are

turning translucent and soft but not mushy. Bubble off any juices before stirring in the sugar, the rest of the juice, the zest, ginger and the muslin bag. Stir until the sugar dissolves.

2 Bring to the boil, remove the muslin bag, then simmer for about 10-15 mins or until the marrow has softened and the jam has reached setting point. Pot the jam into sterilised warm jars.

The flavour of the jam matures and intensifies over a few months, so it's a good idea to make it and keep for later.

PER SERVING 102 kcals, protein none, carbs 27g, fat none, sat fat none, fibre none, sugar 27g, salt none



Spicy new combination

Plumbrillo

MAKES about 7 x 100ml pots ●

PREP 3 mins ● COOK 1 hr 10 mins

Easy 

2kg black or red plums

1kg bag jam sugar
(with added pectin)

- 1 Stone and quarter the plums, then put into a preserving pan. Add 500ml cold water and bring to a boil. Cover and simmer for about 45 mins until completely cooked down, pulpy and a very dark red.
- 2 Sieve the fruit and juice through a nylon sieve back into the pan – make sure you get every bit of pulp out that you can.

3 Stir in the sugar, then stir over a low heat until dissolved. Turn up the heat and bubble for about 25 mins or until you have a thick, dark and fruity purée. Keep stirring so that the bottom doesn't catch – it's ready when the spoon leaves a trail for a split second before the paste fills the gap.

4 Pot the hot mix into small jars (using a funnel is easiest), seal, then leave to set.


This jam keeps for up to 6 months.

PER SERVING 56 kcals, protein none, carbs 15g, fat none, sat fat none, fibre none, sugar 15g, salt none



Spiced beetroot & orange chutney

MAKES 4 x 450ml jars ● PREP 20 mins ●

COOK 1 hr Easy 

- 1½kg raw beetroot, trimmed, peeled and diced (wear gloves!)
- 3 onions, chopped
- 3 eating apples, peeled and grated
- zest and juice 3 oranges
- 2 tbsp white or yellow mustard seeds
- 1 tbsp coriander seeds
- 1 tbsp ground cloves
- 1 tbsp ground cinnamon
- 700ml red wine vinegar
- 700g golden granulated sugar

1 In a preserving pan or your largest saucepan, mix together all the ingredients well. Bring to a gentle simmer, then cook for 1 hr, stirring occasionally, until the chutney is thick and the beetroot tender.

2 While the chutney is cooking, prepare the jars. Once the chutney is ready, let it settle for 10 mins, then carefully spoon into the jars and seal while still hot.

You can eat it straight away but it will be even better after a month. Once opened, keep in the fridge and eat within 2 months.

PER SERVING 48 kcals, protein 1g, carbs 12g, fat none, sat fat none, fibre 1g, sugar 11g, salt 0.04g

Great with
Manchego cheese

TOP TIPS:

- All these recipes keep for at least 2-3 months; store in a cool, dark place for. Remember to refrigerate once opened.
- To sterilise jars, wash them thoroughly by hand, then put in a hot oven for 10-15 mins.
- A bottle of home-made jam or chutney makes for a great hostess gift.

Veg goes glam

Food writer and TV chef Celia Brooks Brown shares three easy, yet impressive, vegetarian recipes.

Photographs LIS PARSONS



Mushroom rarebit with mash & thyme gravy

SERVES 4 • PREP 30 mins •

COOK 1 hr 20 mins **Easy** **V** **I**

This is serious comfort food ideal for a lazy Friday.

FOR THE MASH

1kg floury potatoes, chopped into chunks

25g/1oz butter

100ml milk

FOR THE MUSHROOMS

4 large flat mushrooms, stems removed

olive oil, for brushing

25g butter

1 medium onion, chopped

1 tbsp plain flour

75ml Guinness or other stout

140g vegetarian-style mature cheddar, grated

1 tsp English mustard

2 eggs, beaten

FOR THE GRAVY

2 tbsp extra virgin rapeseed or olive oil

1 medium onion, chopped

2 tsp thyme leaves, plus extra to serve

2 tbsp plain flour

125ml white wine

300ml vegetable stock

½ tsp Marmite

1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6.

Put a large pan of water on to boil and salt it well. Boil the potatoes until tender, about 15-20 mins. Drain, return the potatoes to the pan and place over a low heat. Add the butter and milk, then mash until smooth. Remove from the heat and season with salt. Keep warm.

2 Meanwhile, brush the mushrooms generously all over with oil. Place gill-side up in a baking dish, bake for 15 mins, then remove from the oven. To make the rarebit topping, melt the butter in a saucepan over a medium heat and fry the onion for 10-15 mins until soft and translucent. Add the flour and cook for 1 min. Reduce the heat, then add the Guinness, cheese, mustard and seasoning, stirring until the cheese has melted. Add the eggs and stir constantly until the mixture thickens, about 5 mins, but don't overcook or you'll end up with scrambled eggs. Spoon the rarebit mix into the mushroom caps and set aside.

3 To make the gravy, heat the oil in a pan over a medium heat and add the onion and thyme. Fry for 10-15 mins until the onion is soft and translucent. Add the flour and cook, stirring, for 2 mins. Add the wine, stock and Marmite, then stir until thick. Simmer for about 5 mins.

4 Just before serving, heat the grill to high. Place the mushrooms under the grill and cook for a few mins until the rarebit is puffed and golden. Reheat the mash if you need to, place a spoonful on each plate along with a mushroom. Spoon gravy around and over the mash, scatter with thyme and serve.

PER SERVING 624 kJ, protein 23g, carbs 58g, fat 33g, sat fat 16g, fibre 6g, sugar 9g, salt 1.28g

“I’m so glad that we’re waking up to the gorgeous possibilities of modern vegetarian food. It’s a delight that ancient world cuisines have long enjoyed – using seasonal produce to create dishes with lots of flavour and texture. Vegetarian cooking allows you to be more creative than cooking with meat or fish, but that doesn’t mean it has to be difficult. So wave goodbye to stodgy lentil pie and nut roast, and open up to the versatility of the vegetable kingdom”

Herb & spice paneer fritters

MAKES 12 ● PREP 25 mins ●

COOK 10 mins **Easy** **V**

These Indian cheese fritters make a tasty starter or serve as a main with rice and fresh veg.

1 tsp cumin seeds**227g paneer, coarsely grated****handful coriander sprigs, stems and leaves finely chopped****handful mint leaves, finely chopped****1 spring onion, finely chopped****thumb-size piece ginger, grated****2 garlic cloves, finely grated or crushed****2 eggs, beaten****2 tbsp plain flour****sunflower oil, for frying****lemon wedges and sweet chilli sauce, to serve**

1 Toast the cumin seeds in a large, non-stick frying pan for about 1 min, shaking the pan until a shade darker, taking care not to burn. Remove from the heat and place the seeds in a mixing bowl.

2 Add everything else, except the oil, lemon and chilli sauce, to the bowl. Season well and mix very thoroughly.

Using wet hands, take walnut-size handfuls of the mixture, then press into flat little cakes, like fish cakes or patties. They can now be chilled until ready to cook, or cooked straight away.

3 Reheat the pan over a medium flame and add enough oil to cover the base of the pan. When hot, add the fritters, cook until golden underneath, then turn over and cook until golden all over. Be careful as they may splutter slightly. Drain on kitchen paper and keep warm as you cook batches. Serve with lemon wedges and sweet chilli sauce.

PER SERVING 237 kcals, protein 12g, carbs 5g, fat 19g, sat fat 7g, fibre none, sugar 1g, salt 1.46g

Punchy flavours

Asparagus coconut crêpes with sweet chilli sauce

SERVES 4 • PREP 30 mins •

COOK 20 mins **Easy** **V**

FOR THE CREPES

4 rounded tbsp plain flour

3 eggs, beaten

100ml coconut milk

½ tsp turmeric

4 tsp sunflower oil

4 spring onions, finely sliced

2 bunches asparagus (about 20 spears), trimmed

2 eggs, hard-boiled and chopped

FOR THE SAUCE

4 tbsp golden syrup or honey

4 tbsp light soy sauce

4 tbsp lime juice

2-4 red chillies, finely chopped

1 garlic clove, crushed

50g salted roasted peanuts, ground with a mortar and pestle

TO SERVE

1 cucumber, thinly sliced

1 small bunch mint

1 To make the sauce, mix together the golden syrup or honey, soy sauce and lime juice until smooth. Stir in the chillies and garlic. Transfer to a serving bowl and sprinkle in the ground peanuts. Set aside.

2 To make the crêpes, stir the flour, eggs, coconut milk, turmeric and some seasoning together until smooth. Heat a non-stick frying pan over a medium heat and add

1 tsp oil. Pour in a quarter of the batter in a thin layer and swirl the pan to coat the base. Sprinkle with a quarter of the spring onions before it sets. When golden underneath, flip over and cook the other side. Remove to a plate and keep warm. Make 3 more crêpes in the same way, adding 1 tsp oil each time.

3 Steam the asparagus for 3-5 mins. To serve, divide the asparagus and chopped egg into 4 portions. Place a bundle of asparagus on a crêpe, sprinkle with egg, then roll up – if you want, cut them in half on the diagonal. Serve with a garnish of cucumber and mint leaves, with the sauce spooned over or on the side.

PER SERVING 383 kcs, protein 17g, carbs 30g, fat 22g, sat fat 7g, fibre 4g, sugar 17g, salt 3.23g

Eye-catching, elegant main

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3 great roast recipes

Pull out all the stops at the weekend to cook up a storm for the family.

Roast lamb studded with rosemary & garlic

SERVES 6 • PREP 10 mins •

COOK 1 hr 45 mins **Moderately easy** 🌟

If you have time, stud the lamb a day in advance as this allows the flavours of the garlic and rosemary to really permeate the meat.

- 1 leg of lamb weighing 2.5kg**
- 1 garlic bulb**
- 1 bunch rosemary**
- 1 tbsp vegetable oil**
- 2 carrots, cut in large chunks**
- 1 onion, cut into quarters**
- 1 glass red wine (about 150ml)**
- 1.2 litres beef or lamb stock**

1 Using a sharp pointed knife, make at least 30 small incisions all over the meat. Peel 4 garlic cloves, thinly slice them, then prod a slice into each incision. Next, pull off small sprigs of rosemary and push them into the incisions, too. If done in advance, cover the lamb well and chill.

2 Heat oven to 190C/170C fan. Heat a large frying pan, add a little oil and brown the lamb all over. Scatter the carrots, onion, remaining garlic and rosemary into a large roasting tin, pour in the wine and stock, then place the lamb on top. Roast for about 1 hr 45 mins, turning halfway through. When cooked, remove the lamb from the tin and allow to rest in a warm place covered in foil.

3 To make the gravy, pour all the liquid from the tin through a sieve into a saucepan. Reduce a little on the hob, skimming off any fat that comes to the surface. Serve with the lamb. Delicious with a quick mint sauce too (recipe below).

PER SERVING 580 kcals, protein 65g, carbs 6g, fat 32g, sat fat 15g, fibre 1g, sugar 5g, salt 0.85g

Last-minute mint sauce

Stir **2 tsp golden caster sugar** into **2 tbsp cider vinegar** and 2 tbsp hot water from the kettle until the sugar has dissolved. Finely chop **2 handfuls mint leaves** and add to the vinegar.

It's not authentic, but if you like a bit of heat, add a **little finely chopped green chilli**.



Easy roast chicken & gravy

SERVES 4 ● PREP 10 mins ● COOK 1½ hrs plus resting **Easy**

1 onion, roughly chopped
2 carrots, roughly chopped
1 free-range chicken, about 1.5kg/3lb 5oz
1 lemon, halved
small bunch thyme (optional)
25g softened butter

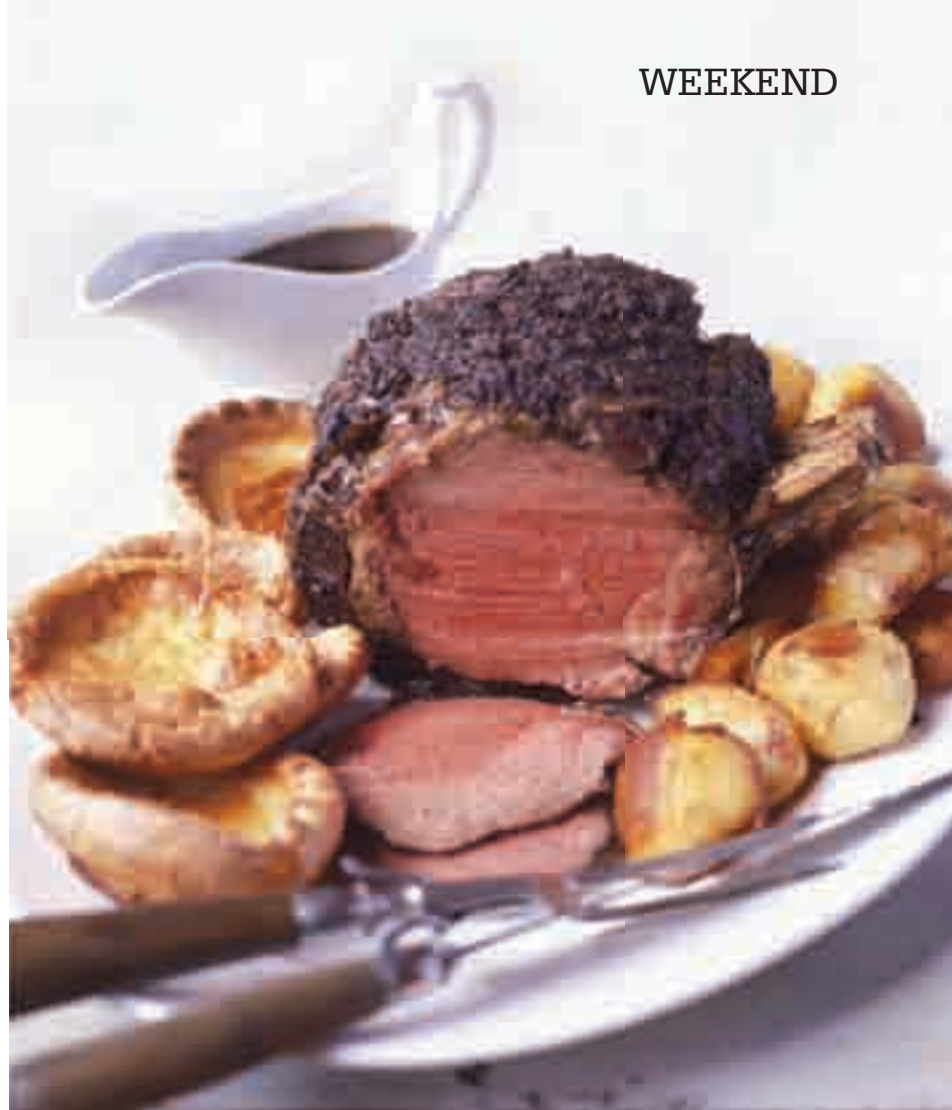
FOR THE GRAVY

1 tbsp plain flour
250ml chicken stock (a cube is fine)

1 Heat oven to 190C/170C fan. Scatter the onion and carrots over the base of a roasting tin that fits the chicken. Season the chicken cavity, then stuff with the lemon halves and thyme, if using. Sit the chicken on the vegetables, smother the breast and legs with butter, then season the outside. Place in the oven and leave, undisturbed, for 1 hr 20 mins – this will give you a perfectly roasted chicken. To check that it is cooked, pierce the thigh with a skewer and the juices should run clear. Remove the tin from the oven and, using a pair of tongs, lift the chicken to a dish or board to rest for 15-20 mins. As you do so, let any juices from the chicken pour out of the cavity into the roasting tin.

2 To make the gravy, place the tin over a low flame, then stir in the flour and sizzle until you have a light brown, sandy paste. Gradually pour in the stock, stirring all the time with a wooden spoon, until you have a thickened sauce. Simmer for 2 mins, scraping any sticky bits from the bottom of the tin. Strain the gravy into a small saucepan, then season and simmer. When you carve the bird, add any extra juices to the gravy.

PER SERVING 567 kcs, protein 49g, carbs 4g, fat 40g, sat fat 13g, fibre none, sugar 1g, salt 0.84g



One-pan rib of beef & roast potatoes

SERVES 8 ● PREP 1 hr ● COOK 2 hrs
25 mins-2 hrs 45 mins **Easy**

There's something very satisfying about bringing a roast to the table, and rib of beef has to be one of the classics. The timing here is for rare beef, so add an extra 5-10 minutes per kilo if you prefer it cooked medium.

4 garlic cloves
2 tbsp thyme leaves
1 tbsp black peppercorns
1 tbsp wholegrain mustard
1 tbsp olive oil
2.7kg French-trimmed rib of beef
weighing, at room temperature
12-16 potatoes, halved or quartered

Heat oven to 220C/200C fan. Using a large pestle and mortar, grind the garlic, thyme, peppercorns, mustard and 2 tbsp olive oil to a paste. Rub the mixture all over the beef and put in a

large roasting tin. Roast for 25 mins, then lower the oven to 160C/140C fan.

Remove the tin from the oven, add the potatoes and toss in the fat, adding the remaining olive oil. Return to the oven for another 1½ hrs for rare or 2 hrs for medium rare. Take the meat out of the oven, cover and leave to rest for at least 20 mins before carving and serving with the potatoes and Yorkshire puddings, and a simple gravy (below).

PER SERVING 767 kcs, protein 60g, carbs 41g, fat 41g, sat fat 14g, fibre 3g, sugar 2g, salt 0.75g

Very simple gravy

Once the meat and potatoes are out of the tin, pour off the oil, leaving behind the juices. Put the tin on the hob, then heat and stir with a **glug of red wine** to remove the sediment from the pan (don't add too much or the gravy will be murky). Pour in **450ml beef stock** and simmer to boil off the alcohol. Re-skim to remove excess oil, then strain into a gravy boat to serve.

Learn to make white sauce

Food writer Mary Cadogan shows how to make this versatile sauce, which provides the basis for many favourite homemade dishes.

INGREDIENTS

1 bay leaf
1 shallot, halved
6 peppercorns
425ml milk
50g butter
50g plain flour

EQUIPMENT

Small pan
Medium-sized non-stick pan
Sieve
Measuring jug
Wooden spoon

Top tips for a smooth and glossy sauce:

- Use full-fat milk to achieve the creamiest flavour. Of course, if you use semi-skimmed milk it will still work, and you'll reduce the fat a little.
- The shallot, bay leaf and peppercorns are infused in the milk to add a savoury edge to the sauce. The longer these are infused, the more flavour they'll impart; ensure a minimum of 10 minutes.
- Butter will give your finished sauce a glossy texture and good flavour. Use unsalted butter for preference, as it's less likely to catch and burn than salted.
- Always use plain flour when making , as self-raising can make it lumpy.
- Cooking the flour and butter together bursts the starch grains in the flour so they will absorb the milk more readily.
- Adding hot milk to the sauce means it is absorbed more quickly and easily into the roux (thickening mixture) to ensure your sauce is smooth.
- Simmering the sauce cooks out any residual floury taste and helps to give it a glossy finish.
- If you need to make the sauce ahead of time, pour a thin layer of milk over the surface to stop a skin forming. Reheat slowly, whisking all the time.

How to



STEP 1

Tear the bay leaf a little to release more flavour, then put in a small pan along with the shallot and peppercorns. Pour in the milk. Bring the milk to the boil, then reduce the heat and simmer for 1 min.



STEP 2

Remove the milk from the heat, cover and leave to infuse for at least 10 mins. Strain into a measuring jug, then return to the pan.



STEP 3

Melt the butter in a medium pan, preferably non-stick, until it has melted and starts bubbling. Tip in the flour and stir well using a wooden spoon. Cook gently for 1 min, stirring all the time until the mixture has slightly lightened in colour and is fluffy in texture. This is called a roux.



STEP 4

Reheat the milk until hot, then pour a little into the roux, stirring all the time until the roux has absorbed the milk and you have a thick paste.



STEP 5

Keep adding the milk little by little, again stirring all the time until each addition of milk has been absorbed and the sauce is smooth and thick.



STEP 6

Cook, stirring all the time to make a smooth sauce that will coat the back of your wooden spoon. Season the sauce with salt and pepper and simmer gently for 1 min more to cook out any remaining floury taste. Your sauce is now ready to use.

NOW TRY...

Chicken & fennel gratin

SERVES 4 ● PREP 30 mins ●

COOK 25-30 mins **Easy** **2 bulbs fennel****200g cooked chicken, torn into bite-sized pieces****2 rounded tsp wholegrain mustard****pinch cayenne pepper****100g Gruyère, grated****1 quantity freshly made white sauce****6 slices baguette****50g walnuts, roughly chopped****1** Heat oven to 190C/170C fan.

Trim the tops off the fennel, reserving the green fronds. Cut the fennel bulbs into quarters and trim off the root. Cut each piece in half again. Cook in a pan of boiling salted water for 6-8 mins until just tender, then drain well.

2 Arrange the fennel and chicken in a buttered 1 litre ovenproof dish. Stir the mustard, cayenne and two-thirds of the cheese into the white sauce. Roughly chop the fennel fronds and stir these in too. Taste and add more seasoning if necessary. Spoon the sauce evenly over the fennel and chicken.

3 Cut the baguette slices into small chunks and mix with the reserved cheese and walnuts. Sprinkle over the filling. Bake for 25-30 mins until the topping is crisp and golden and the sauce is bubbling round the edges. Serve with crusty bread and a crisp green salad.

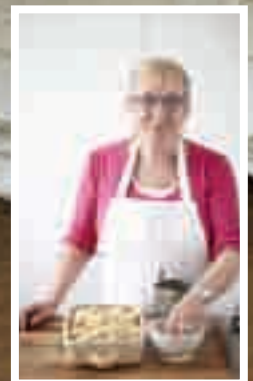
PER SERVING 548 kcal, protein 30g, carbs 25g, fat 37g, sat fat 17g, fibre 4g, sugar 8g, salt 1.57g

Flavour your sauce by adding any of the following:

- 100g grated cheddar or Gruyère, 1 tsp Dijon mustard and a pinch of cayenne pepper. Perfect for cauliflower cheese or pasta bakes.
- For a lower fat result, use half stock and half milk when making the sauce. Great with chicken.
- Gently fry one finely chopped onion in the butter until softened but not browned before adding the flour. Stir in chopped parsley to finish and serve with grilled gammon steaks or pour over cooked vegetables.
- Stir 1 tbsp wholegrain mustard into the finished sauce with the seasoning. Good with grilled fish.



💡 This is a really useful technique to master – you can use a smooth white sauce in a homemade macaroni cheese and lasagne, too. 💡





CHIEF SKILLS: Breadmaking

Baker Paul Hollywood shows how to make a classic French bread with basic dough. Photographs David Munns



Olive fougasse

MAKES 2 • 20 minutes + rising time

● **TRICKY BUT WORTH IT**

Fougasse is a traditional flat, leaf-shaped French bread. This dough is easily made by hand, but if you have a food processor with a dough hook knead it for 5 minutes.

500g strong white bread flour (plus extra for dusting)
salt 10g
instant (fast action) yeast 10g
semolina for dusting
green olives about 40, pitted
olive oil

1 Mix the flour, salt, yeast and 370ml tepid water together in a bowl bringing it together with your hands to form a dough.
2 Knead (see instructions opposite) then put in a large oiled bowl. Leave to rise for 1 hour.

3 Heat the oven to 240C/fan 220C/gas 9. Punch down the dough then tip onto a good dusting of semolina and flour.

4 Divide into 2, shape and flatten into ovals. Put onto 2 baking trays and cut markings into each oval like a leaf using a pizza wheel (see instructions).

5 Leave to rise for 30 minutes then stud the loaves all over with green olives. Drizzle with more olive oil and bake in the oven for 20 minutes until puffed and golden.

PER fougasse 1,012 kcals, protein 32.1g, carbs 196.1g, fat 16.5g, sat fat 2.3g, fibre 9.4g, salt 7.76g

Chef's tip: This basic dough recipe can be used for any type of bread.

Paul Hollywood is a UK-based artisan baker. He worked as head baker in such prestigious hotels as Cliveden and The Dorchester before launching his own company, The Paul Hollywood Artisan Bread Company, which supplies bread to Harrods amongst others.



- 1** Mix the dry ingredients and water bringing it together with your hands to form a dough.



- 2** Tip the dough out onto a floured surface and start kneading.



- 3** Keep working the dough, kneading and stretching out as you go. The dough will become more elastic as you use it.



- 4** After about 10 minutes kneading you will have a smooth ball of dough. Drop it into an oiled bowl, cover with clingfilm and leave for an hour to rise.



- 5** Tip the risen dough onto a surface dusted with semolina and flour. Knock out the air and divide into two. Pat out flat with your fingers.



- 6** Shape each piece into a rough oval shape and put on a baking sheet.



- 7** Use a pizza wheel to mark a leaf pattern into the dough.



- 8** Gently stretch the dough out on the baking sheet to open up the cuts. Leave to rise for another 30 minutes.



- 9** Before baking, stud the dough with whole pitted olives and drizzle with olive oil.

Make your own restaurant-style Custard tart

With its buttery pastry and creamy filling, this classic dish is a dessert menu favourite. It takes a bit of effort, but the result is very special, and your guests will love it. Recipes BARNEY DESMAZERY
Photograph PETER CASSIDY

Custard tart

SERVES 8 • PREP 25 mins plus chilling •

COOK 1 hr 20 mins **Moderately easy** 

This tart has a hint of lemon to lighten the richness, but it can also be left out.

FOR THE PASTRY

140g butter, chilled and diced

250g plain flour

zest 1 lemon

100g golden caster sugar

1 egg, beaten

1 tbsp whole milk

FOR THE CUSTARD

250ml oz double cream

250ml oz milk

1 vanilla pod, split

1 strip lemon zest

whole nutmeg

8 yolks (see tips, far right)

100g golden caster sugar

1 To make the pastry, rub the butter into the flour with the lemon zest and a pinch of salt until it resembles breadcrumbs.

Add the sugar, egg and milk and bring together to form a dough. This can be made 2 days in advance.

2 On a lightly floured surface, roll the pastry out and use it to line a 20cm tart tin, leave 2cm of pastry hanging over the edge. Chill for 30 mins.

3 Heat oven to 180C/160C fan. Line the case with baking beans, bake blind for 20 mins, then remove the beans and continue to cook for a further 20 mins until the base is biscuit-y. Remove from oven and reduce temperature to 140C/120C fan.

4 Bring the cream, milk, vanilla pod,

lemon zest and a small grating of nutmeg to the boil. Beat the egg yolks with the sugar until pale, then pour the hot milk and cream over, beating as you go. Strain custard into a jug, allow to settle for a few mins, then skim off any froth.

5 Carefully pour the custard into the tart case, grate some more nutmeg over the top and bake for 40 mins or until just set with the very slightest wobble in the middle. Remove from the oven, trim the pastry edges off (away from the filling), then leave to cool completely before serving in slices with a grating more of nutmeg, if you like.

PER SERVING 593 kcs, protein 9g, carbs 53g, fat 40g, sat fat 21g, fibre 1g, sugar 29g, salt 0.33g

Pro tips

- In a restaurant, pastry is made in big batches, then portioned and chilled or frozen. If you bake regularly, why not do the same and freeze what you don't use – it will keep for up to a month.
- Using just the egg yolks may seem a little wasteful but it does make for more of a restaurant-style filling. The unused egg whites can be frozen to use for meringues – just make sure you remember to mark on the label how many you have frozen.
- Chefs adapt and develop recipes depending on what they have to hand. For a twist on the traditional recipe, this tart could be made with duck eggs, which will give the custard a deeper colour and richer flavour – use 6 duck egg yolks in place of the 8 chicken eggs.
- You might see custard tart on menus paired with seasonal fruits. Raspberries, strawberries, red currants, stewed blackberries, poached rhubarb and brandied prunes all work well.

☪ A humble name for a stunning dessert, a slice of custard tart comes with a side order of nostalgia that always gets people smiling. I love the slight wobble of the custard and subtle hint of nutmeg in this recipe. ☪

- Barney Desmazery



Four ways with one cake

This scrummy cake is really easy and versatile – pick a fruit you like, and you'll make it again and again, with new flavours each time. Enjoy with a cuppa, or serve warm for dessert with vanilla ice cream. Recipe SARAH COOK
Photographs PETER CASSIDY



Ripe plums



Tangy blackberries

Fresh fruit drizzle cake

CUTS INTO 8 • PREP 15 mins •

COOK 1 hr  before icing**175g very soft butter, plus
extra for greasing****175g golden caster sugar****250g self-raising flour****2 large eggs****2 tsp vanilla extract****175g fruit, stoned and diced
weight – if large, see far right****140g granulated sugar****1-2 tbsp citrus juice – lemon, lime or
orange**

1 Heat oven to 180C/160C fan. Grease a 900g loaf tin and line the base and ends with a long strip of baking parchment. Put the butter, sugar, flour, eggs and vanilla extract into a large bowl and beat

with an electric hand mixer for 5 mins until pale and creamy – the mixture will be very thick.

2 Spread one-third of the cake mix into the tin, then scatter over 50g of the fruit. Carefully dot and spread another third of the cake mix on top, and scatter with another 50g fruit. Finally dot the rest of the cake mix over and gently spread with the back of a spoon. Bake for 1 hr, until an inserted skewer comes out clean.

3 Poke the cake all over with a skewer. Put remaining 75g fruit into a bowl with the granulated sugar. Stir in 1 tbsp of the citrus juice first with a fork, mashing a little of the fruit as you go. If it's a bit dry, add a splash more juice and spoon over the cake. Leave in the tin until the cake is cool and the topping is set and crisp.

PER SERVING 457 kcals, protein 5g, carbs 67g, fat 21g, sat fat 12g, fibre 1g, sugar 44g, salt 0.62g

PICK YOUR FRUIT

All of these fruits work well with this cake:

- Apricots (diced)
- Blackberries (halved, if large)
- Blueberries
- Nectarines (diced)
- Peaches (diced)
- Plums (diced)
- Raspberries
- Redcurrants or blackcurrants
- Strawberries (diced or quartered if large)

*Sweet peaches**Juicy blueberries*

John does weekend lunch

Aussie celebrity chef John Torode shares his ultimate family lunch menu – and it won't break the bank! Photographs GARETH MORGANS

Minced beef Wellington

SERVES 8 • PREP 20 mins •
COOK 1 hr 20 mins **Moderately easy** 🍴

1kg minced beef
100g tomato ketchup
4 eggs
3 onions, finely chopped
3 garlic cloves, finely chopped
small handful sage, chopped
handful parsley, chopped
25g butter
200g mushrooms, finely chopped
500g pack puff pastry
Caramelised shallots, Roasted carrots Creamy mash, (see right for recipes), to serve

1 Mix the beef with the ketchup, 3 eggs, seasoning and 100ml water in a table-top mixer for 5 mins – or squeeze and squelch with your hands in a bowl. Mix in the onions, half the garlic and herbs.

2 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan. Press the meat into a sausage shape about 30cm x 10cm on a baking tray. Cook for 20 mins then remove and leave to cool.

3 Heat the butter in a frying pan over a high heat, add the mushrooms and cook for 3 mins. Add remaining garlic and cook for a further 2 mins, pouring off the excess water from the mushrooms.

4 Roll pastry into a rectangle large enough to wrap up the beef. Beat remaining egg with a little water and brush over pastry.

5 Spread the mushroom mix into a meatloaf-size strip along the middle of the pastry. Sit the meat on top then cut pastry either side into strips from the meat outwards. Criss-cross these over the meat to enclose and tuck under ends. Brush with more egg, then place on a tray and cook for 40 mins, covering after 30 mins if going too brown.

PER SERVING 640 kcals, protein 33g, carbs 27g, fat 45g, sat fat 20g, fibre 2g, sugar 7g, salt 1.42g

Serve with

Caramelised shallots

SERVES 8 • PREP 10 mins •
COOK 30 mins **Easy** 🍴 Good for you

3 tbsp vegetable oil
600g/1lb 5oz shallots, peeled but left whole
25g/1oz butter
2 bay leaves
thyme sprig
500ml/18fl oz beef or veal stock

1 Heat oil in a large frying pan and cook shallots over a high heat for 5 mins. When they are golden, drain off and throw away the oil. Add the butter, bay and thyme and toss with seasoning. Cook for 5-8 mins, stirring so that the butter doesn't burn.

2 Pour over the stock and cook until the shallots are tender and the sauce is reduced and sticky.

PER SERVING 81 kcals, protein 2g, carbs 3g, fat 7g, sat fat 2g, fibre 1g, sugar 3g, salt 0.22g

Roasted carrots

SERVES 8 • PREP 10 mins • COOK 45 mins **Easy**

🍴 🍴 🍴 **Superhealthy** Good source of beta-carotene, counts as 1 of 5-a-day

2kg/4lb 8oz carrots, halved or quartered lengthways
4 tbsp olive oil
4 tbsp honey
2 tbsp red wine or cider vinegar

1 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Bring a large pan of water to the boil. Add the carrots, bring back up to the boil and cook for 5 mins. Drain and leave in a colander to steam dry for a few mins, and then toss in a large roasting tin with the oil, honey, vinegar and seasoning.

2 Roast the carrots for 30-40 mins while the beef cooks.

PER SERVING 158 kcals, protein 2g, carbs 26g, fat 6g, sat fat 1g, fibre 6g, sugar 24g, salt 0.16g

Creamy mash

SERVES 8 • PREP 10 mins • COOK 15 mins
Easy 🍴

Boil **2kg chunked potatoes** for 10 mins until cooked then drain and leave to steam dry.

While still piping hot mash with **100g butter**, **100ml full-fat milk** and season to taste. Serve with a **touch more butter** melting over the top.




🍴 *I have fond memories of this recipe because as a kid we couldn't afford beef fillet to make a Wellington, but my nana would do this little number instead. It's really a meatloaf in puff pastry – I hope you like it as much as I still do! 🍴*



Golden syrup dumplings are an Australian speciality.

Golden syrup dumplings

SERVES 8 • PREP 15 mins •

COOK 15 mins **Easy** 

200g butter

225g soft brown sugar

100g golden syrup, plus 2 tbsp

400ml oz milk

500g self-raising flour

1 In a large, wide pan pour in 450ml water, half the butter, sugar and golden syrup and bring to the boil. Turn it down immediately so it is just simmering.

2 Warm the milk just a little. Meanwhile, in a food processor, pulse the flour and the rest of the butter until it resembles breadcrumbs. Add 2 tbsp golden syrup and the warmed milk and whizz until it comes together.

3 Bring the liquid back to the boil and drop in dessert spoon-size pieces of the dough, turn the heat down to a simmer again and gently cook for 10 mins, turning gently a few times. You may need to do it in two batches so they don't all stick together – just scoop out the first lot with a little of the syrup into a baking dish, cover with foil and keep warm in a low oven while you finish the rest.

PER SERVING 560 kcs, protein 8g, carbs 88g, fat 22g, sat fat 14g, fibre 2g, sugar 42g, salt 1.04g

Serve
with

Vanilla custard

SERVES 8 • PREP 10 mins •

COOK 15 mins **Easy** 

1 litre milk

8 egg yolks

140g/5oz vanilla sugar

3 tbsp cornflour

3 tbsp plain flour

1 Heat the milk in the saucepan until it comes just up to the boil, then take off the heat immediately. In a bowl, beat together the egg yolks, vanilla sugar and flours. Pour the milk slowly over the egg mix, beating well.

2 Return the mixture to the pan and place over a low heat, stirring for 8-10 mins until the mixture begins to thicken.

Remove and serve with the dumplings.

PER SERVING 228 kcs, protein 8g, carbs 31g, fat 9g, sat fat 3g, fibre none, sugar 24g, salt 0.17g



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Barcelona for foodies

Whether it's old-school tapas or intricate dishes influenced by molecular gastronomy, this Mediterranean city is one of the world's top gourmet destinations. Here's our pick of where to go, to sample Barcelona's culinary delights. By Sally Davies.

Where once the architecture of Antoni Gaudí might have been the main reason for visiting Spain's second city, now its varied cuisine, cosmopolitan cocktail bars and designer hotels are proving to be an equal – if not bigger – draw. The Catalan capital's food scene is as much about the plates of fat garlicky prawns and tortilla served at old-school bars, as it is about the modern dishes clearly influenced by the region's biggest culinary star, super-chef Ferran Adrià of El Bulli, at some of its newer restaurants.

Whichever culinary style you choose, prepare to eat late. Lunch can start at around 2.30pm, with dinner taken no earlier than 10pm. There is a strict coffee etiquette, too. Ordering a *café con leche* at any time other than breakfast is a holiday faux pas on par with wearing socks with sandals! To blend in with the locals, order a *solo* (espresso), or a *cortado* (with a dash of milk).

To market, to market

A good start to exploring Barcelona is to wander through La Boqueria, Europe's largest food market. The scrum of chirruping old ladies at market stalls hides a highly developed queuing system. Ask '*Quién es la última?*' ('Who is last?') and respond '*Yo*' ('Me') when the next arrival asks. Be sure to jostle for elbow space with locals at one of the many bars on the market's edges. Some of these places – such as Bar Pinotxo (pronounced Pinocho), which is run by sprightly septuagenarian Juanito – have been around for decades and represent the quintessential Catalan eating experience.

The city still holds the position as the nerve centre for Spain's food revolution, and it has, over the years, developed a reputation as a pioneering culinary destination. Ferran Adrià has made cookery the new rock 'n' roll for a whole generation of Catalan chefs and, for years, every chef was trying their hand at edible foams and hot jelly. However, flavours rather than methods are now

taking centre stage again, as the techniques of 'nueva cocina' have assimilated into the mainstream and the craze for experimentation is finally dying down. Anya von Bremzen, author of *The New Spanish Table* (Workman), describes it as 'a return to produce'. For her, the future of dining is about simple, affordable, ingredient-led places.

Some of the lessons have, however, endured from the city's years riding the crest of the new wave. Adding a foam – or its lighter version, an 'air' – allows chefs to introduce a hint of flavour without cluttering the plate and cooking sous vide (a cooking technique for meat, in particular, whereby it is vacuum-packed and cooked for many hours at a low temperature) allows them greater control and ensures consistency.

Gourmet buys

While visiting, make like top restaurateurs and head to Targa (Pla de Palau) to stock up on flat-bottomed wine glasses. They also sell paella pans and cazuelas (multi-purpose, brown earthenware dishes). Other foodie shopping finds include top-grade, extra-virgin, estate-grown olive oil from Oro Líquido (oroliquido.com); they also sell olive oil-based soap and fragrant candles.

At Formatgeria La Seu (formatgerialaseu.com) you'll find local cheeses such as dense, creamy La Serena, made with sheep's milk.

Those with a sweet tooth will love Bubó (bubo.ws), which stocks colourful boxed petits fours and contemporary takes on the brandy snap, plus jars of almond and chocolate fingers at affordable prices.

Planelles Donat is another sweet haven, offering a staggering range of ambrosial turrón – slabs of nougat-like candy made with almonds, egg yolk and chocolate.

Jamón (ham) from the La Boqueria market also makes a good souvenir. Jamón serrano (mountain ham, dried originally in mountain air, but these days more often in a climate-controlled cellar) is the basic cured ham. A cut above is jamón ibérico, from the small, black Iberian pig, and the best quality is de bellota, from pigs fed only on acorns.

Barcelona's simple pleasures have always endeared the city to food lovers. Add to this the new sense of adventure brought about by its chefs' flirtation with food science and there are probably few places on earth more exciting to eat out.

WHERE TO EAT & DRINK

El Bulli: A two-time winner of the World's Best Restaurant award for the second year running by Restaurant magazine, El Bulli is a two-hour drive north of Barcelona. There is a year-long wait to sample Ferran Adrià's tasting menu. (elbulli.com).

Cinc Sentits: At this elegant but friendly restaurant, sucking pig that has been cooked sous vide for 20 hours, served with a Priorat wine and honey reduction and flambéed apple, is a speciality. (cincsentits.com).

Saüc: This Michelin star restaurant serves up tasting menus with signature dishes including crispy pork jowl with squid, and bread and butter pudding with blood orange sorbet and orange blossom 'air'. (saucrestaurant.com).

Hisop: After a spell at Le Manoir aux Quat Saisons, gifted young gourmets Oriol Ivern and his kitchen-mate Guillem Plà opened up a restaurant with a view to bringing modern cooking to a wider audience. The menú degustación is an innovative parade, including monkfish à la royale - with chocolate! (hisop.com).

La Paradeta: For a fun, not-too-expensive dining experience, try this restaurant where paper cones are filled with your selection from the seafood on ice and then cooked as per your request. (00 34 93 268 19 39).

TapaÇ24: Try classic tapas favourites from chef Carles Abellan, alongside innovations like the McFoie Burger – fast food in celestial form. (carlesabellan.com)

Cal Pep: The quality of the dishes on the menu here makes queuing worthwhile. There's a small dining room at the back, but the real show is at the front bar. (calpep.com).

Inopia: Prime-quality ingredients and meticulous preparation mark out the classic tapas from pastry chef Albert Adrià (brother of Ferran). (barinopia.com).

Bar Pinotxo: Set just inside the entrance to La Boqueria market, this is something of a Barcelona institution – the baby squid with garlicky haricot beans is legendary. (00 34 93 317 17 31).

Espai Sucre: Claiming to be the world's first pudding restaurant, this modern eatery offers

a surprisingly light tasting menu of desserts. (espaisucre.com).

Cremeria Toscana: 20 flavours of homemade ice cream are made on the premises every day – from an indulgently rich zabaglione to a palate-spritzing mandarin. (00 34 93 539 38 25).

Granja M Viader: With its colourful tiled floor and enamel adverts, this is one of the best loved granjas (milk bars). Try the Catalan hot chocolate, stiff enough to stand a spoon in. (00 34 93 318 34 86).

Horchateria Sirvent: A temple to horchata (chilled, sweetened tiger-nut milk), yet another signature local beverage. (00 34 93 441 27 20).

Dry Martini: Home to Barcelona's finest mixologists, don't let the relaxed vibe fool you – they take their drinks seriously here. (00 34 93 217 50 72).

La Vinya del Senyor: A tiny bar with a sunny terrace, they offer an astonishing selection of wines by the glass, most of them Catalan. Look out for local favourites Priorat and Montsant. (00 34 93 310 33 79).

MUST-TRY DISHES:

Arròs negre - A variation on paella, cooked in squid ink

Botifarra amb mongetes - Catalan pork sausage – with haricot beans sautéed with garlic

Buñuelos de bacalao - Golden fried balls of salted cod

Crema catalane - A chilled custard-based dessert similar to crème brûlée

Escalivada - A salad of aubergines, onions and peppers

Fideuà - Paella made with noodles

Jamón Serrano - Cured ham, similar to Parma, which comes in various grades

Mar i muntanya - 'Sea and mountain', the local take on surf and turf combining meat and seafood

Pa amb tomàquet - Bread (sometimes toasted) rubbed with tomato and garlic and drizzled with oil

Patatas bravas - Fried cubed potatoes with chilli, tomato and/or mayonnaise

Suquet - A fish and potato stew



TRAVEL

MEDITERRANEAN

TRY THIS

Recreate the flavours of Barcelona at home with this easy cheese and ham toastie recipe from Carles Abellan of TapaÇ24

Bikini

SERVES 2 • 10 MINUTES • **Easy**

4 slices white sliced bread
10g butter
50g mozzarella di bufala
40g jamón de bellota
40g truffle oil

- 1 Spread the slices of bread with butter and remove the crusts.
- 2 Cover two slices of bread with slices of mozzarella and fine slices of ham. Add top slices of bread and grill on both sides until crisp.
- 3 Brush with truffle oil, cut into four triangles and serve.

Chef's tip: You can also use fresh truffle shavings on top when in season.



WHERE TO STAY

Budget:

- For baroque on a budget, Hostal d'Uxelles is a gem, with perkily tiled bathrooms and drapes falling alongside the beds. Doubles are priced approximately from Dhs320. (hotelduxelles.com).
- Book early for stylish but unpretentious Hotel Banys Orientals. Fridges stacked with complimentary bottles of water are a welcome touch. Doubles are priced approximately from Dhs385. (hotelbanysorientals.com).
- The stylish Hotel Granados 83 features bare brick walls and a sprinkling of Far Eastern antiques. Doubles are priced approximately from Dhs475. (derbyhotels.es).
- Hotel Pulitzer has neat designer touches in its smallish rooms, but the real reasons to come here are the lobby, with its white leather sofas and red paintwork, and the roof terrace lounge bar. Doubles are priced approximately from Dhs530. (hotelpulitzer.es).

Mid-range:

- They recently introduced a dress code (no beachwear or flip-flops) at the Hotel Omm, but don't be fooled – this is no stuffy enclave for businessmen, but rather a hip hang-out. The hotel restaurant, Moo, is superb and there is a plunge pool on the roof terrace (above). Doubles are priced approximately from Dhs820. (hotelomm.es).

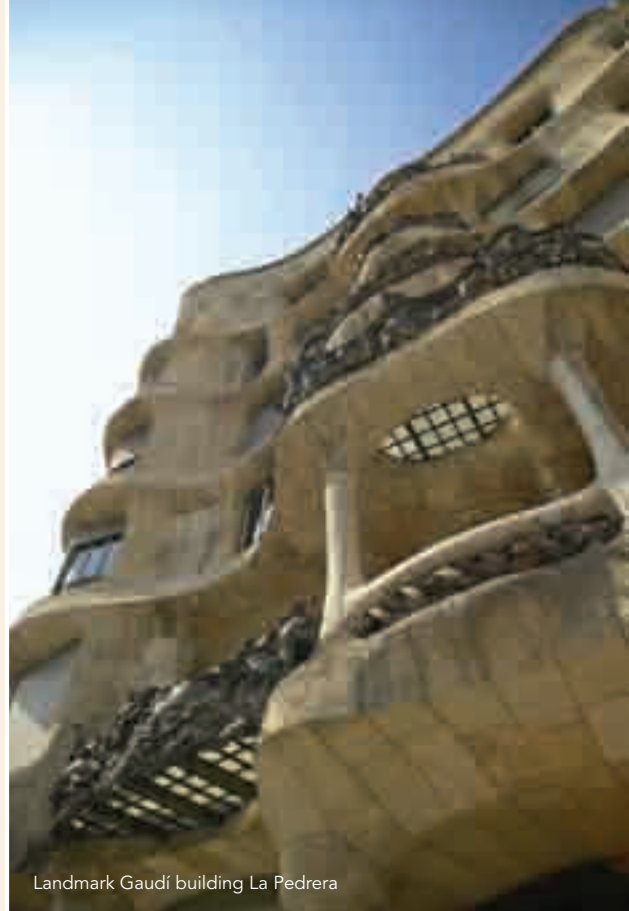
Luxury:

- Hotel Neri is the Old City's most sumptuous boutique hotel. It sacrifices nothing to fashion, however, with ultra-comfortable beds and large bathrooms. Doubles are priced approximately from Dhs1,020. (hotelneri.com).

GETTING THERE

Emirates Airlines flies to Barcelona, via Madrid. Ticket prices start from approximately Dhs5594 (including taxes) return. www.emirates.com

Visit spain.info or barcelonaturisme.com for information.



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Many shops and cafés still have their original Modernist façades and interiors

Tried & tasted

Italian

Each month, we review two of the city's top tables.

Relaxed sophistication



Where: Bice Ristorante, Hilton Dubai Jumeirah

What's it like: The saying 'if it ain't broke, don't fix it' is probably appropriate for Bice – it's been doing what it does best, feeding people delicious, authentic Italian in a stylish yet unpretentious setting, for years. So when I got wind of their *BBC Good Food* set menu promotion – based on their recent win at the *BBC Good Food ME* awards – it didn't take much convincing for me to head down there. The classic wood and white linen ambience was just the right side of elegant, with the happy buzz of diners – many of them families with kids – giving away how popular the restaurant is. Ever loyal to my magazine, I stuck to the (surprisingly affordable) set menu. My starter – a classic caprese salad with a mountain of buffalo mozzarella – was a study in how delicious a fresh and simple dish can be. My dining partner chose to go down the à la carte route, opting for a Burrata cheese with grilled zucchini salad – which would have caused a serious case of food envy if my salad wasn't so good already. My second course, a ricotta and spinach tortellini in a cream sauce had me in raptures of delight and was probably my favourite course of the meal. In spite of having very little room left, my massive Tasmanian salmon steak – pan-fried, and served with asparagus and a gratinated fennel tart – was easily demolished with its melt-in-the-mouth texture and subtle flavours. My pasta-loving partner's penne with chicken and bell peppers in a creamy curry sauce also just hit the spot. We opted to share dessert, and the tiramisu from the set menu was a no-brainer – and I think it officially ended my search for the best tiramisu in town.

If you want to book: The four-course *BBC Good Food* set menu is Dh340; Approx. cost for meal for two is Dh600. Call 04-3182520.

- Sudeshna Ghosh

Intimate date



Where: Medzo, WAFI Dubai

What's it like: Step into Medzo and you will be immediately delighted by the aromas of fresh herbs, reminiscent of an Italian mama's kitchen. You won't be too far from the truth, as the warm restaurant manager and head chef, Nonna Livia who likes to pop by diners' tables to offer her recommendations, very closely resembles said Italian mama. We made our choices while tucking into fresh bread dipped in balsamic vinegar and olive oil, while taking in the stylish, intimate ambience that is perfect for a romantic, candle-lit dinner.

To start, we chose to share the roasted scallops with polenta sauce – the scallops were warm and tender and cooked to perfection and the light sauce complemented it perfectly. For mains, I opted for the Pancetta wrapped organic salmon with lobster potato sauce, spinach and asparagus, which was divine. The salmon was a feast for the eyes and was delicious with the tiny, gnocchi-like lobster and potato pieces in the sauce. My partner, being a meat lover, opted for the Veal tenderloin with sage, prosciutto and porcini mushrooms, and claimed the dish to be a delight in a bite, with the sage offering a subtle aroma, and a parmesan shavings on top giving a sharp after-taste. For dessert, I opted for the vanilla pana cotta with rhubarb jelly that was like an explosion of flavours in my mouth. My partner decided he'd go for the white chocolate tiramisu; being a huge fan of white chocolate myself, I snuck a few bites and found it to be smooth, indulgent and creamy in taste – the perfect sweet ending to a cosy night out.

If you want to book: Approx. price for dinner for two is Dhs 500. Call 04-3244100.

- Nicola Monteath

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DIMA SHARIF

is a Dubai-based cooking instructor, food artisan and blogger who launched her blog, Dima's kitchen, in 2010. With a love of food developed from a childhood spent in her family-owned citrus farms in Jordan, and absorbing her mother's love of cooking, 32-year old Dima describes her cooking style as "giving a unique twist to conventional approaches". She lives Dubai Marina with her husband and two kids.

Meet the blogger

Connecting you to the UAE'S foodie community, one blog post at a time.

Top cooking tip

- Substitute yoghurt for mayonnaise in salad dressings, and flavour with herbs – not only is it healthier, you'll find it actually tastes better.
- When making a dough, roll between two sheets of baking paper instead of a floured surface. The extra bit of dry flour can often dry out the dough.

*About the blog

I like to help others discover the many rewards of cooking. I focus on the method, rather than the recipe, which allows my readers to create rather than just follow. My blog contains not only fail-proof recipes – along with accompanying pictures – but also lots of food-related stories describing the eating experience, as this helps my readers acquire a taste and an expectation, eventually enhancing their ability to create good food. Being completely self-taught myself, I understand a beginner's needs and fears – that's why I always point out the areas in a recipe where there is challenge.

Guilty pleasure?

Roasts with brown sauce made from the drippings. I love to dip a baguette into the sauce – the soaked bit gets soft and melts in your mouth, while the rest of the bread piece remains crusty offering texture. The creamy smoothness of the brown sauce against the chew from the meat in a pool of herbal aromas is an inexplicable experience.



ULTIMATE MEAL

Seafood Paella. I love all things seafood, and cooked in moist rice...



Secret ingredient

I make my own spice mixes, which I grind and mix at home – I find that spices determine the depth and tones of food.



Dima's pantry at home



I'm always in search for the perfect eating experience and the perfect bite!



Culinary icon

I am a huge fan of Michelle Roux Jr. To me, he represents honest food cooked from the heart. I relate with his cooking style and find lots of common ground there.

Food inspiration

I find inspiration in everything, even non-food things, like a colour, for example. I dedicate a trip abroad once a year, searching for new flavours, ingredients, and cooking methods. I go looking for authentic cuisines, natural produce, and food trends. My last trip was to Seychelles to explore Creole cuisine.

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